

Socialist Challenge

INSIDE

Linton Kwesi Johnson speaks to Socialist Challenge plus Bradford 12 Show Trial centre pages



LABOUR MUST STOP

Editorial

Thatcher has started a war. Forget the legal niceties: her troops have attacked Argentinian troops in South Georgia and, as we go to press, are closing in on the Malvinas/Falklands.

This action is positive proof that only blood will satisfy Thatcher: she has been spoiling for it from the start.

Pym's visit to Washington was the height of hypocrisy. He knew British troops were on South Georgia before he left London. As he discussed 'peace proposals' with Haig, both men knew the landing was in progress.

Whose blood is to be spilt? Not Thatcher's not the directors of Coalite who own the island. Not the cabinet's. It will be the blood of the islanders the Tories 'care so much' for, the blood of ordinary Argentinian and British soldiers.

What will they die for? Not for freedom. Thatcher is putting British workers in chains. Galtieri was put there by British and American imperialism, armed by them, and backed to the hilt by them up to the moment he got out of line.

Blood is not to be spilt for the islanders either. Lord Trefgarne put it on the line last year, in the debate on the nationalities act:



'I must remind their Lordships that however strong the affection, the fact remains that the Falklands are not and never have been part of the United Kingdom'.

The only islander's voice to be heard so far has been blacked out by the Tory press. Jim Burgess who fled the islands for Uruguay last week explained 'The islanders think they are being used and I agree'. Millions of viewers saw Mr Burgess silenced by the British consul as he explained to cameramen that the islanders wanted to 'get the hell out'.

The Tories use self-determination when, and only when, it suits their own purpose. The 1300 islanders of Diego Garcia are still being evacuated to make way for an American base.

JOBS NOT WAR

This war is being fought to defend your bosses' right to exploit the world. For this 'freedom' Thatcher finds resources she once said didn't exist.

The war is costing over a million pounds a day. The final tally, we are told, could be anything up to a billion.

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THATCHER'S WAR

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There's no money for the health workers, no money for decent wages, no money for jobs — with jobless totals over 3m again. But what did Thatcher tell the House about the war?

'The future of freedom and the reputation of Britain is at stake. We cannot therefore look at the operation on the basis of how much it will cost'.

For three million jobs, we must tighten our belts. For Thatcher's profits, they sky's the limit.

Britain has no claim on the islands. The only excuse Thatcher can come up with is that 'Britain has governed the islands since 1833'. As pirates we came to the islands, and as pirates we run them. It is an insult to the world to justify piracy by saying it has gone on for a century and a half.

Who can stop this war? The responsibility for this tragedy rests on the shoulders of the Labour Party front bench. They have surrendered to the government without a murmur.

They have handed Thatcher hundreds of thousands of votes.

Opinion polls show the popularity of the government has shot ahead: so much for the idea that Labour would lose election support by opposing the war. Why vote for the monkey, reason Labour voters, when you can vote for the organ grinder?

And what has Labour gained from its support? Nothing.

If it had opposed the war from the start this hated government would no longer exist.

Now, at least a handful of opponents are speaking out. Last Sunday's CND demonstration shows the tremendous scope of opposition to the war. At four days' notice with virtually no publicity, over 1550 came on the streets of London to stop this insanity. A demonstration has been called in Manchester. If Labour gave a firm lead this could be turned into hundreds of thousands.

Socialist Challenge calls on its supporters, on the Labour Party, and on the unions to build a huge campaign to stop the war by withdrawing the fleet. The next stage must be

● Mass public meetings, backed by CND and the Reagan reception committees, in every major city

● Resolutions demanding an end to Labour's support to the war and calling for action to withdraw the fleet from every trade union and Labour Party branch in the country.

What is the alternative to war? Above all, it is the removal of the fleet and the cessation of hostilities. Heffer's call for 'force if need be to back up negotiations' is utterly bankrupt. It means 'make war to get peace.' It is Britain's unjust clinging to its colonies, Britain's sending of the largest peacetime fleet to the South Atlantic, Britain's refusal to negotiate, that is the cause of the conflict. A British withdrawal is the first step to peace.

In this context, while we support any and every action directed at stopping British military action, we cannot accept that the call for the United Nations to administer the islands is a solution. As we explain on page 5, the United Nations has always served as the instrument of the major imperialist powers to secure settlements to their liking. A UN settlement means a Haig-Thatcher settlement.

Moreover it is UN resolution 502 which Thatcher used as the basis of her war drive. Against the demand that she implement this resolution, she simply replies that she is already doing so. The fleet must go. That is the first step to peace.

May day should have been the day of international workers' solidarity. At the hands of Foot and Healey it risks being turned into the blackest stain on the British labour movement's record in this half of the twentieth century. It must not happen.

JOIN THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM

If you would like to be put in touch with Socialist Challenge supporters in your area or would like more information fill in the form below

Name.....

Address.....

Age.....

Union/CLP (if any).....

Send to: Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

Argentine workers seek international unity

THE PROSPECT of a dialogue between the British and Argentinian labour movements is growing.

On the weekend of 24-25 April a packed meeting of delegates to the Scottish TUC were told that the Argentinian CGT — the main anti-junta union federation — is seeking a political solution which grants the Argentine claim to the Malvinas (Falkland) islands, but that it opposes the military action taken by both governments.

The message was relayed by Doug Harrison, Assistant General Secretary of the STUC, who met and discussed with CGT delegates at a recent international trade union conference.

A delegation from the CGT has been touring Europe and has tried to meet British trade union representatives.

They told Socialist Challenge they tried to meet British TUC delegates at a European trade union conference in the Hague early in April, and during a press conference held on Thursday 15 April at the Brussels Headquarters of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. They say they were turned down.

The British TUC in London denies any approach was made. Asked whether the TUC was now considering an approach to the CGT, a spokesperson said that this would not be appropriate under the present circumstances. No reason could be given.

West Lothian MP Tam Dalyell, who addressed the STUC meeting, told Socialist Challenge that he hoped MPs would sponsor any attempt to get CGT representatives into the

country so that a dialogue could begin.

'I am absolutely opposed to this adventure by Margaret Thatcher,' he said. 'On 3 April I asked her who she thought her friends in Latin America were and she replied that we have many. But this operation will leave us without a friend in the Hispanic world. I led a delegation to Brazil in 1975 and in discussions with all sides of the political spectrum I was assured that the whole country is convinced that the Malvinas belonged to South America.'

Explaining that the government had been dissuaded from ceding sovereignty by the Falkland islands lobby, headed by business interests in the islands, he said: 'The real cowardice is from those politicians who were reluctant to tell the truth to the islanders and the British public.'

Several MPs have now expressed interest in the CGT's call for a dialogue and the proposal has won support also in trade union circles. 'I'm sure, if an initiative was taken by MPs to arrange a visit for the Argentinian union leaders, that the STUC would lend its support,' Doug Har-



Buenos Aires: workers demonstrate against seizure of South Georgia



Sunday's London demonstration calls for fleet to withdraw.

Photo: COLIN HEADWORTH (Socialist Challenge)

ison told Socialist Challenge.

Socialist Challenge calls on trade union and Labour Party branches to back the CGT's pro-

posal for discussions on the basis of acceptance of Argentina's claim, and demand that the CGT be allowed into Britain for discussions.

Resolutions should be addressed to the TUC and Labour Party NEC.

Make May day a true day of international solidarity. Unite against Thatcher!

Portsmouth Labour Party calls for fleet recall

DESPITE the suspension of many Labour Party meetings during elections, some branches and GCs have met and passed motions highly critical of labour's front bench stand.

On 15 April Portsmouth GC passed the following resolution from Copnor branch:

This GC calls on the NEC to campaign for:
● the recall of the Royal Navy task force from the South Atlantic;
● financial compensation for Falklands Islands inhabitants seeking resettlement;
● the right of Argentinians seeking refuge from their country's military junta to settle in Britain;

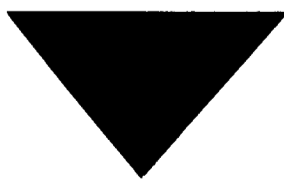
● a complete halt to arms sales to military dictatorships such as Argentina and Chile.

Hooley branch in Sheffield has proposed the following resolution to the GC:

This GC:

● condemns the decision of the British government to send a naval task force to the Malvinas (Falkland Islands) and calls on the NEC and the Parliamentary Party to call for the recall of this force;
● calls on the British government to renounce all claims on the Malvinas and to recognise the Argentine claim on the islands;

● considers that the inhabitants of the Malvinas should be given the choice of leaving the islands and being resettled in the country of their own choice at the expense of the British government.



Socialist Challenge will be keeping track of rank and file support for the anti-war and anti-Thatcher resolutions. If you have any comments, please keep us posted on resolutions passed by your Labour Party or trade union branch.

TASS branch opposes war

THE FOLLOWING motion has been passed by Coventry No 1 branch of AUEW (TASS), the technical and supervisory sections of the engineers' union.

The resolution will now go forward to the TASS executive, West Midlands district committee and the Coventry Trades Council.

This branch opposes the Tory government's plans to go to war with Argentina over the Falkland Islands. The workers of both countries have nothing to gain and it is they who should be asked to give their views. The British and Argentinian workers should unite to demand that the Argentine junta stop its military adventures with arms and warships for many years. The military junta, in an attempt to divert the growing opposi-

tion developing in Argentina, are now pursuing the long-held nationalist aims of that country.

The Tory government and the Parliamentary Labour Party leadership have responded with a jingoistic economic and military response that, with the involvement of the super powers, could lead to economic collapse and world war.

This branch calls upon all representatives in the labour movement to campaign for support for the call of the banned Argentinian TUC (the CGT) for both movements to combine to oppose the war and hence increase opposition to the military junta and the Thatcher government, and immediately to call for the TUC to organise a national demonstration against the war.

Falklands Crisis

Why the fleet should withdraw

Opposition to the Malvinas military adventure is growing by the hour. Socialist Challenge has been speaking to many Labour MPs who opposed it from the outset, and whose voices were drowned in the tide of national hysteria which swept the press and House of Commons.

On Friday 23 April we asked Ron Brown, Labour MP for Leith, Edinburgh, what he felt about Thatcher's war.

I'M TOTALLY OPPOSED to this adventure. War fever has been generated by the capitalist media; but that was bound to happen. Capitalism is again in crisis and, in this situation, inevitably goes to war.

The argument is that the islands are a British possession. I don't accept that: history proves many things depending on your class standpoint. The islands were seized by force by the British ruling class 150 years ago. Some people reckon that time justifies anything; and we know that so often possession is nine tenths of the law — at least, capitalist law.

Naturally enough I disagree with this fascist junta; I disagree with the tactic of seizing the island. But it's also clear that for some considerable time British governments — including Labour governments — have been dragging their feet and were very reluctant to concede the islands to Argentina, although the United Nations urged this course.

I think they are using the islanders as an excuse. The main owner of the islands is Coalite, I understand, and the older people are forced out of the islands because they are no use to the company.

At no time in the past have British governments intervened to protect the islanders; if they weren't interested in the past, then they certainly aren't just now.

And if you look at the question of self-determination, it is interesting that Anguilla, I think it was, was taken over by British bobbies when the island declared for self-determination.

A Labour government — sadly — sent out the long arm of the law to stop islanders in the Caribbean expressing their viewpoint. It's entirely bogus to talk about self-determination.

Plaid Cymru have called for the publication of all negotiations. Do you agree?

That is a very important and interesting point. I think the British public should know what has been going on behind the scenes. We should know what has been said on both sides, so that we can judge.

What should be done now?

This government should resign. For the Tories to say they believe in freedom and democracy is completely hypocritical. The Argentinian junta has been largely built up with British arms and British trade. If a Frankenstein monster has seized the islands, the responsibility lies with its creators, the Tories.

The labour movement must demand that the fleet return to port and that negotiations take place. These cannot really occur

in a meaningful way if you have massive arms sailing south to challenge another army.

By not having a war, we're denying both camps the opportunity to divert workers' attention. It may indeed create the situation in Argentina where the left can come out and challenge. In this country, the labour movement has not done enough to help the left in South America challenge the juntas.

What do you think of the Labour front bench response?

It leaves a lot to be desired. Healey and Foot basically sing the same tune. They may argue, of course, that public opinion indicates that British workers want to get those islands back.

Public opinion is notably fickle. The support the Tories apparently now have will evaporate like snow off a dyke, come a shooting war. If we're seen as part of their team we'll be discredited.

It's often hard to fight prejudice and war fever. But if you're a socialist you've got to do that.

It has been argued by some people we've talked to on the left that it would be suicide for the Labour Party to put this view forward.

I don't agree it's suicide. Workers have often been kidded on and then decided, because of experience, that their former view was wrong. And the individuals who went along with it were in turn ditched and discredited for involvement with the ruling policy. The classical case, of course, was the First World War.

But whatever are the developments it's important for the Labour Party to stand up on principle and fight on principle.

What do you think should be done to stop the war?

We have a situation here — in the gasworks, as Hardie called it — where one part of the left in the Tribune Group believe you have to go along with Foot and Healey. The other half think differently.

Those who disagree with the Healey/ Foot approach must do something about it. Early day motions are important. But that won't change the Tories' views. It's really a matter of linking up with those organisations outside — CND, all those on the left — who see more clearly what's happening and realise the dangers.

What do you feel about the proposal to bring in the United Nations?



Labour MP's Ernie Ross, Jo Richardson, Judith Hart and Tony Benn led the 1500 plus demonstration through Central London last Sunday 25 April calling for an end to hostilities in the Falklands. Socialist Challenge supported the demonstration whilst disagreeing with the organisers call for negotiations through the United Nations.

Tony Benn addressed the concluding rally appealing that 'All those that oppose war with Argentina should speak up now. ...The excuse that this is a war against fascism carries no weight since the way to fight fascism is to isolate it internationally instead of supporting it and arming it as Britain did with Argentina. The existence of fascism in Argentina cannot be used as an excuse for war.'

'It requires much more moral courage to argue for peace now than to go along with the crude war-mongering. But to stay silent would be to accept responsibility for the tragedy. We here today speak for the gagged majority. Millions of people in Britain want peace and do not support the use of war'. He reiterated his call for recourse to the United Nations.

I don't regard the UN as an ideal body. It could be that some neutral country could be used to act as mediator: Sweden, Switzerland, or whatever.

But while I have reservations about the United Nations at times, more emphasis should go along with that particular point of view rather than Haig, who is certainly not an honest broker, nor Reagan, who is incriminated in all sorts of unsavoury situations throughout the world.

Neither British nor Argentinian workers can trust them. They want a deal which will keep the status quo. If we can get a deal which can give us an argument to force a

general election, then we should take the opportunity. Likewise we should be encouraging Argentinian workers to do the same.

But the Argentinians, whatever the nature of the regime, have a legitimate claim to the islands. That has to be faced up to, and I think the US would recognise that: and that is one reason Reagan, Haig, Thatcher and Pym are reluctant to use the UN. We should be arguing that the UN should be used in this situation.

However, the one basic demand that British workers can put forward is that the ships be returned to port. We cannot guarantee that the UN will be involved, nor that it will

put forward solutions that will suit everyone or indeed anyone. We don't have that control. But we do have the industrial muscle, the political muscle, to influence events in this country.

This government is going to war on the working class in this country. It's going to war through the economy by destroying jobs, destroying living standards, and they're now going into a shooting war. Many people in this country will be killed if this government gets its way. So it's in the interests of the British working class to put up a challenge now, not just to sit back and wait for things to happen. Because things

will happen, if we allow the Tories to get away with this suicidal policy.

It appears that the Argentinian trade unions have put out a call to meet with the British trade unions. Do you think there is any chance of getting a dialogue?

I suspect that the TUC General Council will be very unwilling to enter into any dialogue with the Argentinian trade unionists. But that's not to say that individuals on the TUC general council and other leading trade unionists may not be interested — I'm sure they will.

I'm sure it will arouse

general interest in the trade union movement. If the left MPs can do anything to encourage that, I'm sure we will all get a good response.

It's something that should have been considered some time ago.

We've got to make up lost ground, because whatever happens we've got to try and come together with workers' leaders elsewhere — particularly in Argentina, to put up a challenge to the international capitalist system. The Argentinian trade unions have a point of view and it's got to be heard. It should be heard in this country by the MPs and union leaders.



Part of the strong Socialist Challenge contingent on Sunday's demonstration

Youth CND backs anti-Reagan protests

By Bob Pennington

DELEGATES to last weekend's Youth CND conference gave an excellent example of how to fight the war drive. They voted overwhelmingly to send a contingent on the London march against the war in the Malvinas, called by CND.

And they also voted to support the mass mobilisations planned against Reagan's visit to Britain in early June — the national CND march on 6 June, the Reagan Reception Committee picket of the US Embassy on 7 June and its lobby of parliament on 8 June.

Youth CND delegates carried with only one vote against a resolution condemning the decision of CND's national council 'to have nothing to do with the Reagan Reception Committee event on 7 June'. London Region Council of CND toed the national line and voted by 13 to 9 against supporting the picket after their chairperson Duncan Rees threatened to resign over the issue.

The CND executive on 3 April took this crazy decision and instructed 'all its staff to cease work on the 7 June event' despite the fact that dozens of CND groups around the country have been in the forefront of establishing local Reagan Reception Committees to maximise the opposition to the World's number one warmonger when he comes to Britain.

This hostility to the Reagan Reception Committees and their mobilising actions flows from the confused policies of the CND leadership. This was spelled out in CND's publication Campaign which complained that Reagan's visit would 'draw off many other heads of state from the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament'.

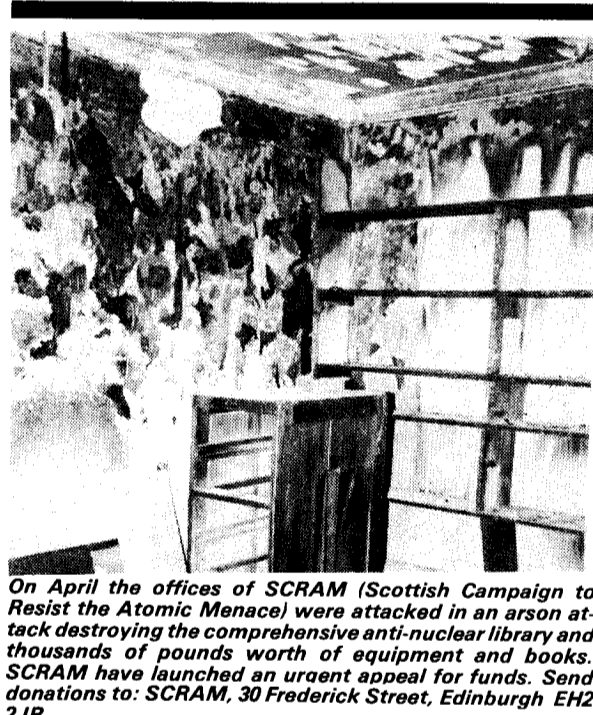
CND's national leaders start from the idea that if the governments of the imperialist powers can be brought together to discuss with the USSR then a sensible compromise can be agreed. Hence they are hostile to 'diversions' like mass actions against Reagan's visit.

Thankfully many thousands of CND members, Youth CND members, labour movement activists agree more with Socialist Challenge that it is only the independent action of working people that will stop the warmongers like Reagan. That's why we support the struggles of the peoples of Central America, especially El Salvador, in their opposition to Reagan and US imperialism.

Every defeat for Reagan in Central America makes it harder for him to use nuclear weapons. Every mass demonstration of hundreds of thousands of people against his trip to Europe will also stay Reagan's hand further. Another good reason to support the dozens of local Reagan Reception Committees round the country. **National Reagan Reception Committee, PO Box 51, London SW10.**



Photo: COLIN HEADWORTH (Socialist Challenge)
YCND Conference delegates. Inset Stella Coyle, elected to the national council.



On April the offices of SCRAM (Scottish Campaign to Resist the Atomic Menace) were attacked in an arson attack destroying the comprehensive anti-nuclear library and thousands of pounds worth of equipment and books. SCRAM have launched an urgent appeal for funds. Send donations to: SCRAM, 30 Frederick Street, Edinburgh EH2 2JR.

Fascist heads El Salvador assembly

EL SALVADOR has a 'pathological killer' as the president of its constituent assembly. Roberto D'Aubuisson, head of the fascist ARENA party, and reputed head of the notorious death squads, was given this graphic description by former US Ambassador to El Salvador, Robert White.

D'Aubuisson's right wing block has already voted through a new low quorum for the assembly which will allow it to legislate tough 'anti-terrorist' measures with no regard to the Christian Democrat opposition.

D'Aubuisson threatened during the election campaign to end the guerrilla war 'by whatever means necessary' — a reign of terror which would make the 30,000 deaths of the last three years look like a tea party.

But the Reagan administration in the US

won't be worried by such 'details'. New US Ambassador Hinton explained last week that the administration would continue to support the El Salvador government. He described the recent elections as 'an example of democracy at work'.

The new international solidarity front with the El Salvador people has other ideas. In the coming months it plans days of action, petition campaigns for 100,000 signatures in every country, and other solidarity actions.

FDR speaker tours

Manchester

MANUEL BRAVO, member of the diplomatic representation in Britain of the El Salvadoran FMLN/FDR, completed a successful tour of the Greater Manchester area last week, reports Redmond O'Neill.

The tour, organised by the local Stop Reagan and El Salvador Committees, included speeches to the Manchester North and Stockport AUEW district committees.

These bodies en-

thusiastically agreed to affiliate to the campaigns and to organise a further factory tour of the FMLN/FDR from 17-21 May. This will form part of a week of action against Reagan's visit to Britain and will include a mass sponsored walk, local rallies, a film tour and a photographic exhibition.

Manuel's tour culminated in a rally attended by 150 people at the Lesser Free Trade Hall, Manchester.

Publish past negotiations with junta, says Plaid Cymru

'I DO NOT recall a British task force being sent to defend the Sandinista revolution,' Plaid Cymru MP Dafydd Ellis Thomas told Socialist Challenge last weekend. 'The Tory claim to oppose the junta is wholly spurious: the "enemy" was armed by them and was indeed exercising in Cardigan Bay as late as 4 March.'

Plaid Cymru has called on the government to publish previous negotiations with the junta so that the British people can judge where responsibility lies for the present dispute: a demand supported by Leith MP Ron Brown in an interview printed on page 2 of this paper.

Dafydd Ellis Thomas felt that Plaid would 'tend to say that sovereignty should be ceded, although perhaps not immediately, to the Argentinian people.' He himself supported a resolution, rejected by two votes by Plaid's NEC, calling for the immediate transfer of sovereignty.

'Negotiations on the Falklands should include some form of devolution,' he said. 'But if the transfer of sovereignty had been carried out in 1965 the present situation would not have arisen. The Labour government was discussing this course but bowed to Tory pressure.'

Plaid's resolution

'Plaid Cymru condemns the military invasion of the Falkland Islands by a fascist regime in Argentina and the use of gunboat diplomacy by the UK government. We call for the immediate withdrawal of the Argentine troops and the recall of the British task force in order to avoid a totally unnecessary war.'

'We further call for discussion to be started without delay under the chairmanship of the UN to establish a new structure for the future of the Falklanders which recognises the essential geographic and economic links with Argentina while safeguarding the human and civil rights of the islanders.'

'Plaid Cymru reaffirms its contempt for the human rights record of the Argentine junta but also condemns the willingness of the British government to supply arms to that regime. Successive British governments have failed to act in accordance with the UN resolution of 1965 to consider with Argentina the constitutional problem of the Falklands.'

'In this context we call for the publication of all documents relating to the negotiations between the Argentine and British governments over the issue so as to clarify the responsibility for the perpetuation and possible escalation of the dispute.'

An Phoblacht on Malvinas crisis

THE MALVINAS/FALKLANDS are not the only colony defended by the British armed forces. The anti-imperialist forces in the North of Ireland have been quick to denounce British imperialism's war threats against Argentina. We reprint excerpts of an article from *An Phoblacht* 5 April by Kevin Birke and Ciaran Dowd.

BRITANNIA it appears does not after all rule the waves. Or at least we have to wait to see if its hastily assembled fleet of half-sold, half-condemned naval vessels and commandeered passenger liners (still the third largest navy in the world) can recreate one of the British people's fondest myths.

Argentina was a colony of Spain until 1810 when it became independent after a fierce struggle. Britain, however, with its powerful navy and domination of trade took over as the dominant imperialist power in the area. To guard its trade routes round Cape Horn it sent HMS 'Clio' in 1833 to evict the Argentinian

governor from the Falkland/Malvinas islands and installed British settlers there.

For the Argentinian people, the reconquest of the Malvinas has been a cause for justifiable nationalist celebrations. But these nationalist sentiments have been grossly abused by the corrupt and brutal military dictatorship which rules their country, and it is generally accepted that the expedition of reconquest was also a cynical move to distract attention from the severe economic crisis, and from the internal protest against repression which have been regaining strength in the country far more forcibly in recent

months than at any time since the military crackdown in 1976.

On the face of it, it might be argued that the 1,800 settlers on the Falklands/Malvinas must be delivered at any cost from the hands of such a dictator. But, there are in fact almost twenty thousand British nationals already living, apparently contentedly, on the Argentinian mainland.

And the other solution has been suggested of offering the Falkland Islanders a new start in either Britain or New Zealand. Although this echoes a British Foreign Office leak last month as a possible solution for discontented Northern loyalists in the event of a united Ireland, for the Falklanders it appears a more realistic idea.

The system under which the Falkland sheep-farmers live is practically feudal. The islands are in fact owned by the

Derbyshire-based Charrington Coalite Company, a subsidiary of Charrington's, so that their homes are effectively 'tied cottages'.

When they are too old to work the islanders have to leave their homes and the islands and move elsewhere, usually to New Zealand or back to Britain.

In the light of this, Britain's bleatings about the 'self-determination of the Falkland Islanders' rings very hollow indeed.

But in terms of these world politics the reconquest of the Falklands/Malvinas does have some significance. For Britain it exposes the illogicality of its billion pound nuclear missile programme at the expense of what are called 'conventional weapons' although no-one outside of Britain would like to see that country regain an ability to meddle widely in world affairs.

For the United States

How Britain milked Argentina

By Will Reissner

WHEN ARGENTINE troops landed on the Malvinas Islands on 2 April, they focused the world's attention on a small piece of Argentine territory that has been occupied by Britain for 149 years. Although the Malvinas were the only portion of Argentine territory over which Britain exerted direct political control, in the 19th century British capital turned all of Argentina into a *de facto* colony, a status that continued until after World War II.

In 1828, five years before the British seized the Malvinas, for example, they were directly responsible for breaking off what is now Uruguay from Argentina.

Large-scale British investment in Argentina first occurred around the building of railroads. But it skyrocketed following the 1876 introduction of the first refrigerator ship that could transport meat from Argentina to Europe without it spoiling.

In 1884 the first meat-packing plant was built in Buenos Aires with British capital, and by 1890 there were 278 refrigerator ships constantly shuttling between Buenos Aires and Britain.

At the turn of the century, fully 80 per cent of all foreign investment in Argentina was British. British control over Argentine life had become so overwhelming that 19th century Argentine President Bartolomé Mitre called England 'the principal factor in the country's

political, social and economic progress.'

By the 1930s British capitalists controlled about three-quarters of the railroad mileage, most urban railway transit systems, much of the crucial meat-packing industry, and had large stakes in chemical works, tyre factories, and other industries. In addition, Britain was by far the largest customer for Argentine meat and grain, and was Argentina's largest supplier of industrial imports.

In 1933 Argentina's status as a virtual British colony was formalised in the Roca-Runciman pact. Under the terms of the treaty, Argentina promised to buy guaranteed amounts of British industrial goods in return for a British agreement to buy specified amounts of Argentine beef.

As late as 1942, of the total \$2.5 billion in foreign investment in Argentina, 60 per cent came from



HMS Invincible. The naval task force is a warning to all semi-colonial countries

British capitalists. Their biggest foreign competitors, US capitalists, controlled only 20 per cent.

Following World War II, however, the overwhelming British control over the Argentine economy was broken. During the war, Argentina had continued to sell Britain large amounts of beef and grain, although Britain had nothing to sell in return. As a result, Argentina built up huge currency reserves in British banks.

Juan Perón, who had become president of Argentina in 1943, used these huge reserves to buy out British investments in Argentina, making himself a hero of Argentine nationalists in the process.

When the Argentine government purchased the British-owned railroads in 1948, there was rejoicing throughout the country.

In the postwar period, US capitalists have surpassed their British counterparts in terms of *direct* investment in Argentina. But British banks continued to play a crucial role in Argentine financial life and in financing the country's huge foreign debt.

Today Argentina's foreign debt stands at the astronomical level of \$32 billion. Of Argentina's

total foreign debt, nearly \$6 billion is directly owed to British banks, and much of the rest was syndicated through London banks.

In this connection, the Thatcher government's freeze of Argentine deposits in British banks and its veto on any further loans to Argentina could deal a crippling blow to the Argentine economy.

The development of the crisis around the Malvinas Islands demonstrates the extent to which Britain remains a major imperialist power, despite its relative economic decline since the Second World War.

In addition, the British imperialist state still has the military power to send troops halfway around the world to defend its economic and political interests. In this sense, the dispatch of the British fleet — including nuclear submarines and aircraft carriers — to the South Atlantic is not only a warning to the Argentine government to keep its hands off 'British property', but is a warning to all semicolonial countries that the British military will defend British economic interests throughout the world.

From Intercontinental Press

United Nations Blue helmets of imperialism

By Phil Hearse

FOR MANY on the left, the idea of a United Nations force to administer the Malvinas seems like a good solution. After all, aren't the blue-helmeted United Nations troops around the world keepers of the peace? Aren't they independent of the world's great powers?

Unfortunately, the answer is no. Since the Second World War the United Nations troops, albeit from different countries, have intervened in the interests of imperialism to preserve the existing world order against socialist revolution and other progressive movements which threaten it.

The first major use of 'United Nations' troops was in Korea from 1953 to 1956. At a time of major international tensions, the Soviet Union was boycotting the UN Security Council — the dominant committee of the UN which makes the decisions about where UN troops should be sent. Once hostilities broke out between North Korea, the United States got a resolution through the Security Council to send UN troops.

The troops were largely American, although with contingents from Britain and other Western countries. Their enemies were not only the North Koreans, but also the Chinese People's Liberation Army.

The UN operation in Korea was far from being one of 'peace keeping'. Commanded by the fanatic anti-communist General MacArthur the United States Air Force destroyed virtually every

building in the North Korean capital Pyongyang and devastated the countryside.

MacArthur wanted to use the nuclear weapons and to invade China. In Korea the United Nations troops were the agents of bloody counter-revolution.

The largest UN military operation since Korea has been in the Congo — with Irish, Swedish, Indian and Ethiopian troops. When the Congo was granted independence in 1960, the country started to break up — with the mineral-rich province of Katanga — which supplies 60 per cent of the world's cobalt, most of its radium, 10 per cent of its copper and a host of other precious commodities — going for secession and independence.

Katanga's President Thsombe was linked with Belgian imperialism. But the United States wanted a unified Congolese state,

with no privileged access for European imperialism to Katanga's riches. The United Nations troops fought not for 'peace', or to police a truce, but for the ending of Katangese secession.

Moreover, the United States worked actively for the overthrow of the radical president of the Congo, Patrice Lumumba and his replacement by the pro-American Mobutu.

United Nations troops were unable to prevent the abduction and assassination of Lumumba — he was flown off to meet his fate in a United Nations plane.

Elsewhere — in the Middle East, in Cyprus and on the India-Pakistan border the UN troops have acted as forces for maintaining the *status quo* between rival factions.

The United Nations has a multiplicity of organisations, sub-departments, cultural and aid organisations, many located in Geneva. But its central political organisations, the General Assembly the Security Council and the full-time political secretariat are located in New York and depend heavily on US financing. The Security Council makes the decisions about the deployment of troops. The imperialist powers have a veto on any proposal.

The General Assembly of all nations can pass resolutions but not despatch troops. Since the mid-1960s the General Assembly has been more and more influenced by the non-aligned, neo-colonial countries who pass many resolutions opposed to the interests of American imperialism. These resolutions are just ignored if they go against the interests of the United States and world imperialism. The classic case is Namibia, allegedly a UN 'protectorate' but under the control of South Africa. Despite numerous resolutions the imperialists have not lifted a finger to end South African control.

For the Soviet Union, the General Assembly is a useful forum to cement its alliances with third world countries. The UN permanent bureaucracy and structures facilitate the diplomatic manoeuvres of the Kremlin.

But the essential point remains: there can be no action of United Nations troops outside and against the interests of imperialism. Lenin described the UN's predecessor, the League of Nations, as a 'thieves' kitchen'. Nothing has changed. If the UN intervenes, it will be only because Thatcher and Reagan want them to.

Exiles in Argentina Speak Out

'EXTRACT from telegram sent on 7 April 1982 to Margaret Thatcher by the consul for the British community in Argentina:

"In the name of the consul of the British community, in the name of over 100,000 persons, we respectfully beg to inform you that you have not taken our situation into account in the delicate problem now confronting Argentina and Great Britain ... the Argentinian population has shown not the slightest hostility towards us. We call on

you immediately to search for a peaceful solution to this problem."

The telegram cited above is quoted by the Argentinian exile community in France, who placed a quarter page advertisement in the Paris daily *Le Monde* on 22 April in support of their call for recognition of Argentina's claim.

Arguing that 'We want to show the reasons behind the adherence of all currents or Argentine opinion to the Argentine claim, including dissidents, exiles and adversaries of the government', the advertisement goes on to quote letters, telegrams and declarations from the Argentinian Islamic, Jewish, Irish and Italian communities.

'This unanimity,' says the advert, 'shows that popular support for the reconquest is not an invention of the present authorities and that it is not directed by the government press. It arises, on the contrary, from a demand founded on historically acquired rights, to which Argentinians have been attached for generations, and which we are convinced is legitimate.'



South African police break up a SWAPO rally in Namibia. Namibia is supposedly a UN protectorate. But despite numerous resolutions the illegal South African occupation remains unchallenged

Grenada: in no one's back

PAT KANE, a leading member of the International Marxist Group, has just returned from a five month visit to the Caribbean island of Grenada.

Three years ago, on 13 March 1979, the Grenadian people overthrew the dictator Eric Gairy. For the first time in the English-speaking Caribbean, a revolution had swept away a corrupt neo-colonial ruler. The Grenadian revolution has sent shock waves throughout the region, and has forced two American presidents and the Thatcher government to try every dirty trick of destabilisation.

Pat Kane made two trips to Grenada last winter. First as a volunteer electrician, and secondly as a staff reporter for *Intercontinental Press*, a sister publication of *Socialist Challenge* published in New York.

Brian Grogan spoke to him about his experiences.

What have been the main social and economic gains of the revolution?

The most important difference since the revolution has been the transformation of the people of Grenada. You can't measure this in statistics. Everywhere I went, ordinary working people were running the economy and government ministries, and all aspects of life.

The people are very active and enthusiastic about the developments since the revolution.

Social and economic advances in a developing country are very closely linked. Free milk, education, health care, subsidised school uniforms, new sports facilities and the expansion of culture — all products of the revolution — have to be paid for.

Youth and women who have been among the main beneficiaries can see directly the need to increase economic efficiency — not to make more profit for some multinational company but to extend the services that have been provided by the revolution already.

Imperialism was against any development that benefited Grenadians. Under Gairy, they had a negative growth rate. It took the revolution to even develop a fishing fleet to exploit the rich fishing grounds off Grenada. Previously, a majority of fish eaten was imported from Canada!

There are still capitalists. The Grenadians describe this situation as 'a mixed economy, where the state sector is dominant'.

What do they mean when they talk about a mixed economy?

Well it's not the same thing as when Denis Healey or Tories like Ted Heath talk about a mixed economy in Britain.

There's nothing 'mixed' about our economy. The nationalised sector is run by capitalists to provide cheap services for other capitalists. Grenadian capitalists are not like ours. They are mainly confined to the service sector — hotels, shops, food stores, estate owners. Their importance in the economy is decreasing.

It's similar to Nicaragua after their revolution. Once the revolution expropriated Gairy's holdings, they automatically controlled a

majority of the arable land and hotels, plus they gained control of Gairy's shares in other sectors.

The state takes all the initiatives in the development of the economy. Last year state investment accounted for 95 per cent of all investment, which goes mainly into capital projects like new industrial and agricultural developments.

The overall aim is to rapidly disengage the Grenadian economy from imperialism through development of existing markets and the funding of new ones. At the same time it is important not to disrupt the economy, and thereby the welfare of Grenadian working people, by moving too fast in this field. The US and British governments are looking for any excuse to attack Grenada.

Does this imply that Grenadians are accommodating with capitalism?

No, they are trying to control it, and use it to develop the state sector. The last budget introduced a whole range of taxes which will force the private sector to move in the same direction as the government. Bernard Coard, the Finance Minister called this the carrot and stick approach.

Within the economy there is a massive movement towards planning and accountability. Literally thousands of Grenadians participated in the preparations for the budget, and they have just introduced their first one year plan.

The whole process of economics is de-mystified, and this attacks one of the fundamental pillars of capital, business secrecy. Every workers meetings discusses 'opening the books' of state and private concerns.

The major difference in Grenada is the government. The Grenadian government rests on the workers and small farmers, and each time there is a conflict of interest, they back the workers.

The government has introduced a whole series of laws to protect workers rights, introduce maternity leave and equal pay for women. It has legalised trade unions and the right to strike.

How have the masses been involved in the economy?

During December, all the



Photo: PAT KANE
Prime Minister Maurice Bishop (leaning over) together with other Grenadian leaders

Parish Council and workplace meetings received preliminary reports on the plans for the economy. The government declared 1982 the 'Year of Economic Construction'. All the mass organisations elected delegates to a conference to discuss the economy. 1000 attended, from a population of only 110,000. There were 27 different workshops.

After the conference, every delegate reported to their organisation. Then, the broader masses were involved through the Parish Councils.

Maurice Bishop, Prime Minister

We need your solidarity, comrades, because this revolution is increasingly a light, a beacon of hope to the poor and exploited masses of the Caribbean. The aims, objectives and achievements of this revolution are a crystallisation of the most profound human aspirations of Caribbean people towards a better life.

For 400 years the exploited masses of the region have struggled with dignity for bread, jobs, justice and peace.

Today in Grenada, today in free revolutionary Grenada, this struggle is at last beginning to bear fruit. And this fruit is not for us alone. It is not the property of ourselves alone.

Just as our struggles have been part of the broader struggles of the working people of the Caribbean and the world so now, our Revolution is an integral part of the forward movement of the working people regionally and internationally.

(from a speech to first international conference in Solidarity with Grenada, November 1981)

It's estimated that 30,000 people participated, and read the very detailed report. Every suggestion was noted, and integrated into the final budget speech. And the process will continue. Two more huge conferences are being organised this year. The whole island is now full of lay-economists!

One result of the conference was the establishment of a whole series of committees in state workplaces to monitor and control production, and they report to the weekly, and sometimes daily, mass meetings.

The trade unions are actively involved in all aspects of the economy.

The Government called on the trade unions to struggle in the private sector to implement the same types of measures. Mass participation and control are the cornerstones of the government's economic strategy.

Grenada is a tiny country. Why are the US and British governments so hostile?

Grenada is part of the revolutions of the region — Cuba, Nicaragua, El Salvador — and it points to a different path for

they will fight to defend their country. The youth are particularly active in every aspect of the revolution, and they are in the front ranks of the militia and army.

The New Jewel Movement talk about the revolution having three, inter-related but separate pillars: mass participation, and democracy, the economy, and defence. They take all three very, very, seriously.

The imperialist press talk about Grenada developing into a totalitarian state. What is political life like in Grenada?

Hectic, that's the only way to describe it. Everyday there are meetings and rallies, and the radio is constantly providing information and educational material. The press lie about Grenada, just as they lie about Thatcher being a defender of democracy. In Grenada, there are more elections in a week than there are in Britain in a lifetime. Because there is no Parliament, where the capitalists can dominate the country, the press claims there is no democracy.

You should go there and see for yourselves. You'll see the involvement

of the Grenadian people from the minute you get off the plane. It's a different type of democracy — a democracy, like the Soviets of early revolutionary Russia, which has grown out of a generation of struggle by the Grenadian people.

Bernard Coard, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Trade and Planning

Our Agro-industrial plant is a brick, our fish school is a brick, every new feeder road is a brick, every move forward in education from free secondary education to NISTEP, every housing estate every cooperative, every new hotel.

These are our bricks comrades, the sand and cement is our unity, our commitment, our work, collective strength and determination to solve problems and sit down together, our huge energy and our consistent struggle. If we put all together there is nothing that can stop us ...

(Extract from Report on the National Economy for 1981)

The ordinary people are active within the unions, women's and youth organisations, and the geographically based Parish Councils. In a village with a total population of only 900, 200 will regularly attend the Council meetings. Every aspect of running the country is discussed by these different organisations.

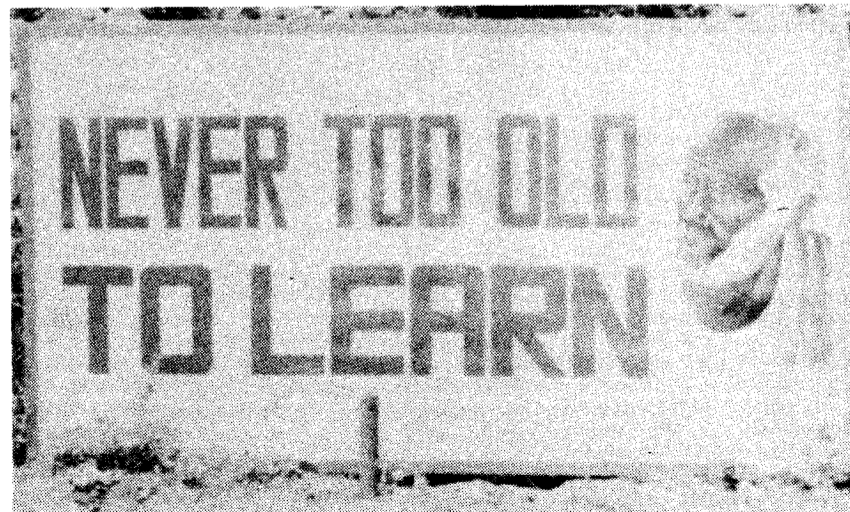
How accurate do you think the comparison is with the early Soviet

state in Lenin's time?

There are huge differences in the contexts of the two revolutions. In what the Grenadian leadership share with Lenin and Trotsky is the orientation to solving problems through

mobilisation and involvement of working people. This is fundamental.

Because of this, Grenadians have shown that whatever mistakes they might make, they have a tremendous capacity to learn and modify their proposals accordingly. For example, on the 10th anniversary of revolution, they were satisfied with the 10,000 people that attended celebration rally. Remember, it was



Billboard in town of Sauteurs

yard



'Workers March'. Part of the third anniversary mobilisations

time of the terrorists' attacks which had begun to intimidate some people. So it expanded the involvement in the militias and took other measures to dramatically expand the mass organisations.

What you describe is very different from the reality of Eastern Europe — like Poland. How would you define the Grenadian leadership politically?

There is a world of difference between the NJM and the Stalinist bureaucrats of Eastern Europe or China. Jaruzelski bases his rule on smashing up the mass organisations. The exclusion of the masses from political involvement is a life and death question for the bureaucrats as the crackdown on Solidarity has shown.

The Grenadians put their confidence in the masses. They encourage the involvement in every conceivable form of mass organisation — organisations with their own elected leaderships and finances. The defence of the revolution is not seen in a retreat to so-called 'socialism in one country', but through its extension. They see the defence of the revolution against imperialism by politically mobilising the masses — the Grenadian people are armed through the militias.

How would you define such a leadership which encourages and deepens mass involvement? Which acts as if they had read Trotsky's thesis from the Platform of the Left Opposition to 'make the state closer to the worker, the peasant and the washerwoman'? Which promotes class independence rather than class collaboration? Which sees defence of the revolution through its international extension? Surely, this is our general framework.

You can't lead a revolution through all its

Jacqueline Creft, Minister for Education, Social Affairs, Rural development, Women's Affairs, youth and sports

Comrades, when we declare in our slogan that 'Education is a must!' we are declaring that for everyone in our country it is not only a right, it is an imperative.

For without it we can neither grow nor develop, we can only regress — as we did under the gloom of the dictatorship. With it, we can and will transform our nation, and in doing so transform ourselves and our children, and become a catalyst for the growth of peoples' power right through our region.

(from a speech at first international conference in Solidarity with Grenada, November 1981)

twists and turns, maintaining the fundamentals of class independence, without some sort of socialist strategy. It seems to me inadequate to define each of these revolutions in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Grenada and so on as 'exceptions' — as we defined the Cuban revolution. In my view, the only way to define them is as conscious extensions of the Cuban revolution.

What has been the role of the Cubans?

Without revolutionary Cuba, the Grenadian revolution would not exist.

Solidarity with Grenada Conference
Saturday 8 May
10am to 4pm
Speakers Workshops
Films Exhibition
The English Centre
Sutherland St., SW1
(Tube Pimlico and Victoria)

Public Meeting
Bernard Coard,
Grenada Finance Minister
Sunday May 2nd
11am
Ritz Cinema
Brixton
(Tube: Brixton)
Organised by
Caribbean Labour Solidarity

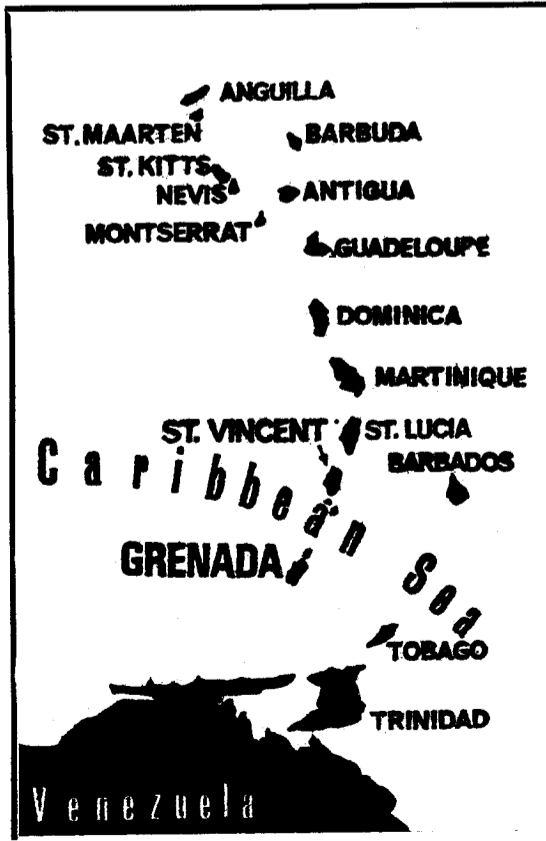
capitalist countries. But the main aid comes from Cuba. Castro challenged the United States to a campaign of 'emulation'. He promised that Cuba would send more teachers, more doctors and more unselfish aid than the United States — despite the gargantuan differences in size and economic advance of the two countries. Cuba has won hands down.

Cuba gives aid in every field — and it's freely given.

There's no Cuban banks or factories to exploit profits from the Grenadians. Aid from the imperialists is always used to seek political and economic advantage.

Cuban aid is geared into Grenada's struggle for self-sufficiency. It makes them independent, not dependent.

The Grenadians have obtained some aid from

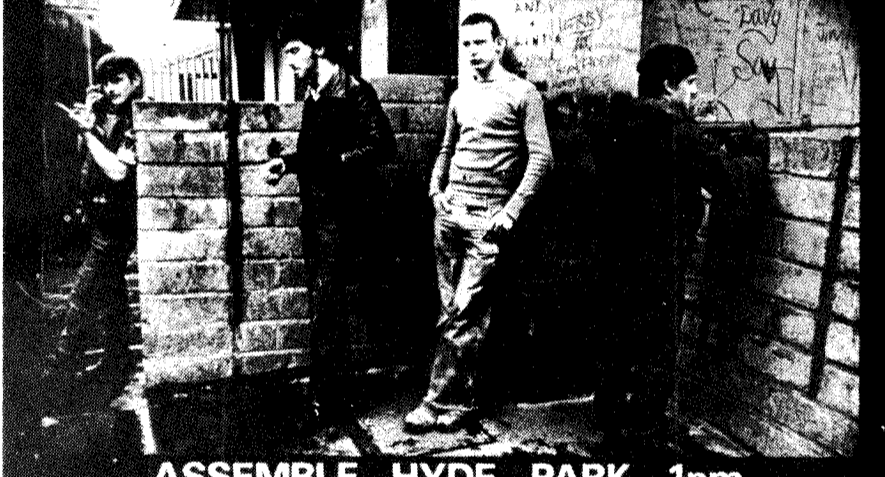


DEMONSTRATE IN LONDON
MAY 8th BRITAIN OUT OF IRELAND MAY 8th
SELF DETERMINATION FOR THE IRISH PEOPLE



ASSEMBLE HYDE PARK 1pm

DEMONSTRATE IN LONDON
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ASSEMBLE HYDE PARK 1pm

If Steven McConomy had been a Falklands Islander

By Tom Marlowe

JUST OVER a week ago Steven McConomy was murdered by what his community regard as foreign troops, the forces of occupation of their island. Steven was 11 years old. He was murdered when the foreign troops fired a plastic bullet at him at point blank range.

If Steven had been a resident of the Falklands and if the troops who killed him had been from Argentina then no doubt he would have received the sort of posthumous fame reserved for British war heroes. As it was, Steven was not killed in the Falklands, but in another and an even older British colony — Ireland. He was murdered by British troops.

Consequently, the world's media paid little attention to Steven's death. That is not surprising. After all, death by plastic bullet is becoming so common in the North of Ireland that it is hardly even newsworthy any more.

Eleven people have died that way in the last couple of years. Three more were killed by rubber bullets, the weapons used by British troops before the plastic variety. Of those who have died, over half have been children. Literally hundreds more have been injured.

They Shoot Children, a recent pamphlet on

plastic bullets (published by Information on Ireland, Box 189 Ivor Place, London NW1, 50p plus 20p postage) quotes Jonathan Rosenhead of the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science on the 'cavalcade of injuries' plastic bullets inflict: 'eviscerated eyes, smashed hands, triple fractures of the leg, head wounds requiring 40 stitches, injuries to the kidney, liver, groin and throat.'

Following the death of Steven McConomy the National Council for Civil Liberties called for a ban on the use of plastic bullets. Lord Gifford, who has conducted an inquiry for the NCCL into the death of another plastic bullet victim, 15-year-old Paul Whitters, who was killed by the police last April, concluded: 'Once plastic bullets have been issued it is not possible to safeguard their use.'

Many in the North of Ireland will testify to that. For instance, the family of

Carol Ann Kelly who was killed a year ago by a plastic bullet fired by British soldiers. Carol was returning from the local shop and had a carton of milk in her hand when the killers struck.

The NCCL call for a ban on plastic bullets is unlikely to evoke a sympathetic response from the Tory government. Similar calls have been ignored in the past, and in December 1981 Tory Northern Ireland Secretary James Prior even rejected a request for a review in the use of plastic bullets. Indeed these bullets have now been given to the British mainland police for use in 'riots'.

As a consequence, some have sought to raise the issue elsewhere. For a moment last week it looked as if they would be successful when, last Wednesday, the European Parliament was scheduled to take an emergency debate calling for the banning of plastic bullets by all EEC member states.

But at the last minute the debate was postponed. The European Parliament debate on the use of plastic bullets in the Falkland Islands.



Photo: Andrew Potheary

National demo in Leeds early April. First mass picket of Leeds lawyers are fighting moves by court to have a completely Crown Court gathered 500 in support of Bradford 12. Defence white jury.

Bradford 12 on trial for political beliefs

By Toni Gorton

'THE CASE of the Bradford 12 is perhaps as important for blacks', says Linton Kwesi Johnson, 'as the Mangrove 9 trial in 1971. The defendants ought to be supported.'

The support for the 12 Asian youths whose trial began on 26 April has been sweeping in: from the London Labour Party at its recent annual meeting to the organisations of the black community.

It is seen as an elementary duty within the labour, black and civil rights movement to fight this attempt by the state to victimise black political activists.

The youths are charged with making an explosive substance with intent to endanger life or property, and conspiracy to make explosive substances. These charges carry a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. All 12 are pleading not guilty.

The Bradford 12 were arrested following last summer's uprisings. Some bottles filled with petrol had been 'found' on waste ground in Bradford. After two days of racist abuse which the police called 'interrogation' they extracted 'voluntary' statements admitting responsibility. As in a growing number of cases recently involving black youths these statements were later retracted.

The court jailed them for three months after arrest and only granted bail on the condition that they were

home by 10pm each night and kept away from all meetings organised for their defence. By imposing these unheard-of conditions the court admits this is a political trial.

Why these twelve? Because they are among the most committed anti-racist fighters in the area. Anwar Ditta declared earlier this month that 'the Bradford Twelve are like my sons — without them my children would not be with me today.

'It was their support over the years of my struggle which helped me to defeat the racism and sex discrimination of the Home Office.'

They were also involved in the Jaswinder Kaur campaign, and Gary Pemberton would be in jail today if it weren't for them. They were members of the United Black Youth League — an independent radical group.

The Yorkshire police, especially in Bradford, have a record of frame-ups. Just last week George Lindo, a Bradford West Indian was awarded almost £25,000 compensation for the year he spent in prison for an armed robbery he did not commit.

As a result of the campaign of the George Lindo Action Committee the case was brought to national attention.

It charged that Lindo was framed by Det Constables Brierley, Jackson and Det Sgt Craven. Brierley was found to be concocting evidence in the Ripper case.

Craven was involved in the case of a young man, Mr Elliot, who also made a statement while in custody admitting to an offence of rape. Later

another man confessed to the rape. In both situations the circumstances matched the allegations made by Lindo against the officers.

No amount of money will make up for the anguish of George Lindo and his family for the four years they have had to live with this unjust persecution.

Already the Bradford youths have been suffering the threat of life imprisonment for the best part of a year.

It is not only the question of concern for the youths themselves which is at stake here. The police have resurrected the conspiracy laws to put them in peril.

One of the youths arrested last week in Notting Hill was also charged with 'conspiracy'. It is clearly going to be an important part of the police arsenal against any black fight back.

The National Council for Civil Liberties has described the concept of conspiracy as 'a legal monster begot by political expediency and bred by lazy prosecutors, undemocratic in origin, uncertain in scope'.

The last trial under the infamous conspiracy laws of 1875 was the Shrewsbury 3, when building workers were actually jailed. In June 1972, the national building workers' strike began for £1 an hour basic wage and the 35 hour week. It came in the middle of a series of industrial clashes between the Heath government and the trade unions.

In February 1973 24 building workers were arrested on charges arising from an incident the previous September.

Six of them were charged with 'conspiracy to intimidate', 'causing an affray' and unlawful assembly'.

A variety of sentences were passed including on Des Warren who served three years.

Although during the same period the labour movement responded vigorously to the Pentonville 5, getting them released in 2 days, it did not mobilise to defend the Shrewsbury building workers and they suffered the consequences.

It is useful for Linton Kwesi Johnson to remind us of the Mangrove Nine. The black movement defended them and they won. According to A Sivanandan, an historian of the black movement, 'They unfolded before the nation the corruption of the police force, the bias of the judicial system, the racism of the media — and the refusal of black people to submit themselves to the tyrannies of the state.'

Vigorous campaigning can defeat the police, the judges and the government who seek in this case to create legal precedents and thereby intimidate political action by black people.

It is not too late. Join the pickets at Leeds Crown court every day at 10am. Fill the public gallery in the courtrooms. Raise the issue in your unions and other organisations and protest to the Home Office.

Contact the Bradford 12 National Mobilising Committee, Box JK, 59 Cookridge St, Leeds 2. Cheques to be made payable to Bradford 12 Defence Fund.

Some of the organisations and individuals who have supported the Bradford 12

Bradford: Guru Govind Singh Sikh Temple, Guru Nanak Sikh Temple, Ramgarhia Sikh Temple, Islamic Centre, Hindu Cultural Centre, Bradford Trades Council, AUEW (Eccleshill Branch), TGWU (1192), Bradford District Labour Party, Bradford North Constituency LP, Undercliffe Ward LP, Green Lane Youth Centre, Bradford University SU, Bradford College SU.
Leeds: Sikh Temple, Islamic Centre, Trades Council, TGWU (ACTSS), ASTMS, Equity, Come-Unity Collective, Out of Work Centre (Swarthmore), Third World First, Leeds University SU, Leeds Poly Labour Club, the Standing Conference of Pakistani Organisations.
Nationally: Pakistan Muslim Welfare Assoc, Shree Lohana Mahajana (Ashion-u-Lyne), Indian Workers Association (IGB), Pakistan Women's Organisation, Bengali International, Federation of Bengali Youth Organisations, Birmingham Youth Movement,

Dewsbury Asian Youth Organisation, Sikh Gurudvara (South London), Jamaica Society, (Manchester), West Yorkshire County Association of Trades Councils, Lambeth Trades Council, Hackney Trades Council, Wandsworth Trades Council, Camden Trades Council, Westminster TUPS Branch (APEX), ACTS Central London, ACTS South London ACTSS (SW London), ASTMS 507 Branch, GMWU (MATS) Central London, ASTMS No 15 Div Council, NATFHE (Kilburn Poly), Lewisham NALGO, National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers, Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union, Hackney NUT, City and East London College NATFHE, North Hammersmith NUPE.
Ken Gill (Chair, TUC Equal Opportunities Ctee), Cliff Williams (AUEW Convenor), Martin Eady (NUR London Vice-pres), St Paul's LP (Bristol), Battersea LP (Queen's Town Branch), Ealing-Acton LP, Hornsey LP, Holburn and St Pancras LP, West Lewisham LP, Tony Benn MP, Lord Ted Willis, Kevin Moore (Lambeth Council), Merie Amory (Brent Councillor), Peter Tatchell (Bermondsey LP), Big Flame, Hyde Park Socialist, Jewish Socialist Group, Revolutionary Gay Men's Caucus, Irish Republican Socialist Party, Armagh Co-

ordinating Group, Latin American Women's Group, Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association, Christians against Racism and Fascism, Troops Out Movement, Young Communist League, Achilles Heel, National Association of Disabled Writers, Migrants Action Group, Southampton ANL, The Spade, Hammer and Pen Society, National Writers and Readers Publishing Co-op, Blair Peach Memorial Fund.
Wandsworth NAME, 121 Books, Lewisham Way Centre, Independent Film Makers Co-op, Brent Community Bookshop, North Islington Law Centre, Thamesdown CRE, Birmingham Community Assoc, Newsreel Collective, Journeyman Press, Sheba Feminist Publishers, David Edgar, Ron Halverston (CP Chair), Asquith Gibbs (Lewisham CRC), Wally Brown (Merseyside RC), John Willis (Film Maker), University of York SU, London Students Organisation, National Union of Asian Students, National Union of Students, Middlesex Polytechnic Students Union, Coventry Poly SU, Manchester Poly SU, Black Students Alliance (Essex Univ), Sussex University SU, Hammersmith College SU, King's College Socialist Society, Kashmiri Workers Assoc, Bangladesh Workers

Assoc, Bangladesh Welfare Assoc, South East Region TUC, London LP, Wandsworth NALGO, London CARF, Birmingham CARF, Indian Workers Association Hind Mazdoor Leha, Pakistan Workers and Peasants Party, Black Liberation Front, Khan Family Defence Committee, Reggie Yates Defence Campaign, Paul Worrel Campaign, Richard Campbell Campaign, Mohinder Singh Defence Campaign, West London Defence Committee, Brighton Defence Committee, Liverpool 8 Defence Committee, Namibia Support Committee, Co-ordinating Committee for the Defence of Iranian People's Struggle (Manchester), Women Against Imperialism, NCCL, Huddersfield Action Committee Against Racism, Peter Hain (Putney LP), Revolutionary Communist League, IMG, Revolution Youth, SWP, ANL, RCP/WAR, RCG, CP (GB), Millan Community Project (SL), Wandsworth CCR, ACTSS (Branch 41214), Socialist Organiser (Sheffield), Asian Youth Association (Sheffield), Black Consciousness Group (Sheffield), Asian Women Community Workers Group, Lambeth NUT, Asian Solidarity Society (NELP).

'WE'

LINTON KWESI JOHNSON words 'a political and nationally renowned' to music — which of the struggles of the Britain.

One year after the day after another, the Hill Toni Gorton Challenge and Gary Socialism spoke to his politics.

LINTON Kwesi Johnson was born in 1952 in Chapleton, Jamaica. He left there in 1963 to join his mother who had emigrated to England in 1961.

His poetry was first published in the journal 'Race Today' in 1969.

Di Great Inshreckshan

it woz in April nineteen eighty-wa doun inna di ghetto af Brixton dat di babylan dem cause such a an it bring about a great inshreck an it spread all ovah di naeshan it was a truly historical okayjan

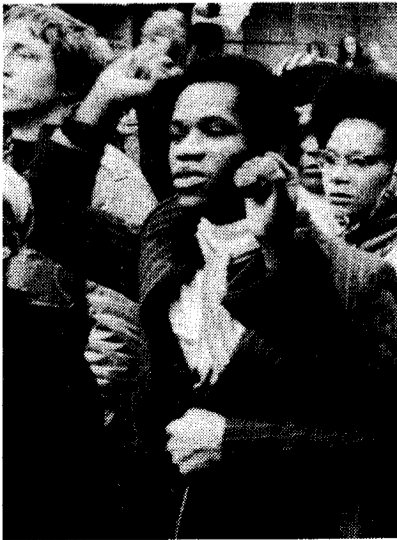
it woz event af di year an I wish I ad been dere wen wi run riot all ovah Brixton wen wi mash-up plenty police wen wi mash-up di wicked wan wen wi mash-up di Swamp Eight fi wha? fi mek di rulah dem andahstan dat wi naw tek noh more a dem

an wen mi check out di ghetto grapevine fi fine out all I coulda fine evry rebel jussa rebel in dem stor dem a taak about bout di powah dem a taak bout di burnin an di dem a taak bout di smashin an di dem a tell mi bout di vanquish an

dem seh: di babylan dem went to soh wha? wi ad woz fi bun two kyar an wan an two innocent get mar

but wha? noh soh it goh sometime inna wa een star noh soh it goh sometime inna wa

dem seh wi bun dung di George wi coulda bun di lanload wi bun dung di George wi nevah bun di lanload wen wi run riot all ovah Brixton wen we mash-up plenty police wen wi mash-up di wicked wan wen wi mash-up di Swamp Eight



RE DI FORCES OF VICT'RY'

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Brixton uprisings and
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and one year later it published his
first book of poems, *The Voices of
the Living and the Dead*.

Bogle L'Ouverture published
his second volume *Dread Beat
and Blood* in 1975. A film of the

I AM an artist who creates for
people's entertainment and edifica-
tion and enlightenment. If my poetry
does that I'm happy. If it doesn't I'll
have to try harder.

If I do write about matters which
are of political significance and im-
portance that is only by accident. It's
only because I happen to be a political
animal who is involved in organisa-
tional politics.

I have been involved in the black
movement since I was a youth. Maybe
I would still be writing poetry if I
hadn't been involved in the move-
ment with about something complete-
ly different.

But I don't ever get the two mixed
up. You end up with a very cheap pro-
pagandist art and I'm totally against
that.

I don't believe you can legislate

for art. You can't say that the artist
must be conscious and the artist *must*
write to free people. An artist creates
out of his own experience and at cer-
tain times in history there are certain
individuals who happen to have these
concerns and their art reflects it.

For example, Martin Carter, the
Guyanese poet; Nicolas Guillen from
Cuba; and even in England William
Blake who did the painting.

These are coincidences. You can
have an artist produce good art and be
politically reactionary and vice versa.
I think as far as the black movement is
concerned that what I do in *Race To-
day* is more important than writing
ten poems or making ten albums.

Poetry has a role to play. I
wouldn't go so far as to say it leads to
political action. It has a role to play in
the ideological struggle, the struggle

for ideas.

All it does is to reinforce existing
sentiments. I think my poetry has a
way of recording our experiences and
of expressing the sentiments that we
have. These are popular sentiments. I
don't invent them.

I'm not saying that art has no role
to play in the revolutionary move-
ment. Obviously it does. But it is very
dangerous to overestimate that role.
It is a stimulus.

What most artists hope for if they
have a revolutionary perspective is that
their art, whether their songs, their
novels, their poetry will make people
think about their situation — or
educate them.

It's about entertainment — not in
the show business sense but you listen
to a piece of music for instance and it's
sad. And because you're a human be-
ing and you have that human capacity
for sadness you're moved. That's
entertainment. And if that isn't what
you do then it becomes cheap pro-
paganda. And bad art as well.

**At the poetry reading at the Book
Fair you finished off with a poem
about Brixton — Di Great In-
sohreckshan I got the impression
you were perturbed at the lack of
political understanding of the
people about what they were do-
ing? I am wrong?**

Yes, you are wrong. The poem is a
celebration of the military stand that
people took in the streets. It records
what happens. It makes the point that
if the state responds with a greater
degree of repression then people on
the streets will respond accordingly.

**Why was the First International
Radical Black and Third World
Book Fair established and did you
see it as part of building the black
movement?**

The idea didn't just drop out of
the sky. It was a continuation of work
which had been done since the 60s by
both Bogle L'Ouverture and New
Beacon Books.

Not just in terms of publishing
and making available the kinds of in-
formation they felt important for the
black working class to have at its
disposal but also in terms of other
cultural activities — plays, poetry and
so on.

It tried to break the stranglehold
that the metropolitan publishers have
on the dissemination of information
and ideas, to make a contribution
towards the cultural development of
the black working class.

**When we spoke to Darcus Howe,
the editor of Race Today, a couple
of weeks ago he felt that youth
couldn't remain at the level of
spontaneous uprising, they had to
go onto another stage of political
organisation.**

Well that's commonsense. Its ob-
vious. Now the police have these
plastic bullets that they've been killing
people with for the last ten years in
Ireland. They have CS gas. So this
spontaneous thing won't work
anymore.

**Where's the black movement
today?**

I think we're at the centre of British
politics. Our struggles to break out of
the colonial mould into which we
were placed when we came in the 50s

have had an tremendous impact.

There's not one left organisation.
that isn't trying to get a foothold in
the black movement right now. I
think that's a positive sign of the im-
portance of blacks.

For example, the insurrections
which took place over the last couple
of years involved both black and
white. But blacks were the leadership.
I think that whatever happens in Bri-
tain in the next twenty years, blacks
are central to it.

**Well Socialist Challenge would
agree with you wholeheartedly
there! But you tended to express
yourself as if socialist organisa-
tions have a parasitic or ex-
ploitative relationship to the black
movement?**

It has been so you know. That was
our experience in the 60s. I don't
know if its changing now. When
blacks first came and we had our pro-
blems we were totally ignored by the
white left. The Communist Party may
have tried to recruit a couple.

The fact that blacks were working
under colonial conditions doing work
for less money than their white
counterparts and no one came and
told us 'well you shouldn't be doing
this. You should join a union'.

Nobody was there. But once we
made a thrust well everybody was
there. This is the line: 'Black and
white unite and fight'.

I think that link between the black
and white working class is there. We
don't live in isolation from each
other. We wage struggles together on
the factory floor and we wage strug-
gles together against the kinds of
education or non-education we're
getting.

We wage physical battles together
against oppressive forces on the
streets. I think slogans like 'black and
white unite and fight' are spurious
because it happens anyway.

**I think the way that the slogan is
put forward is an argument
against black self-organisation.
Right.**

**Socialist Challenge supports
black self-organisation. How do
you see yourselves in the debate
between black separation and
black self-organisation?**

I don't know if I'm qualified to speak
on behalf of the Alliance of the Black
Parents Movement, the Black Youth
Movement and the Race Today Col-
lective on this. What I do know is that
the question of separation or non-
separation has never been an issue
with us.

The Alliance has always had a
working class perspective. We've
always said we're for workers and
peasants power. In Britain there are
no peasants so we're for workers
power. We believe that society must
change and we want to assist it to
change.

**What's the mood among the
youth now?**

They know that the police are
prepared for another confrontation.
The attitude is, well they want it, we'll
give it to them.

But I don't think anyone is going
to go out and look for another insur-
rection. The mood is there. It's an
uneasy truce.

same title, financed by the Arts
Council of Great Britain,
documented a poet in the making
and was screened by the BBC.

His third collection *Inglan is a
Bitch* was published in 1980 by

Race Today.

He has recorded his poems to
music. *Dread Beat and Blood* is on
the Virgin label. *Forces of Victory*
in 1979 and *Bass Culture* in 1980
are on the Island label.

IT DREAD INNA INGLAN

(for George Lindo)

dem frame-up George Lindo
up in Bradford Toun
but di Bradford Blacks
dem a rally roun

mi seh dem frame-up George Lindo
up in Bradford Toun
but di Bradford Blacks
dem a rally roun

Maggi Tatcha on di go
wid a racist show
but a she haffi go
kaw,
rite now.
African
Asian
West Indian
an' Black British
stan firm inna Inglan
inna disya time yah

far noh mattah way dey say,
come wat may,
we are here to stay
inna Inglan,
inna disva time yah

George Lindo
him is a working man
George Lindo
him is a family man
George Lindo
him nevah do no wrang
George Lindo
di innocent one
George Lindo
him noh carry no daggah
George Lindo
him is nat no rabbah
George Lindo
dem haffi let him go
George Lindo
dem bettah free him now!



dem seh: wi comandeer kyar
an wi ghaddah aminishan
wi buil wi barricade
an di wicked ketch afraid
wi sen out wi scout
fi goh fine dem whereabouts
den wi faam-up wi passi
an wi mek wi raid

now dem run gaan
goh plan countah-hackshan
but di plastic bullit
an di waatah canon
will bring a blam-blam
will bring a blam-blam
nevah mine Scarman
will bring a blam-blam

Linton Kwesi Johnson Published in Race Today, Feb-March 1982



Photo: G Cookson

3 the hard way

An evening of poetry
with Dub Poets

Michael Smith (Mi Caan Believe it)
Linton Kwesi Johnson (Sonny's Lettah)
Oku Onouua (I.A Tell)

Lambeth Town Hall, Acre Lane/Brixton Hill
Brixton London SW2

Wednesday 12 May 1982 at 7.30

£2.75 Tickets from Race Today, 165 Railton Rd, SE24 tel 01-737
2268

Where you can buy Socialist Challenge

Scotland

ABERDEEN: SC available at Boomtown books, King St. For more info ring Bill 896 284.
EDINBURGH: SC sold Thur 4.15-5.15pm Bus Station, St Andrews Square and bottom of Waverly steps 4.30-5.30; Sat 11.30-2pm East End, Princes St. Also available from 1st May Books, or Better Books, Forrest Rd. More info on local activity from SC c/o Box 6, 1st May Bookshop, Candlemaker Row.
GLASGOW: SC sales every Thur/Fri 4.30-5.30pm at Central Station. Also available at Barretts, Byres Rd; Clyde Books, High St; Glasgow Bookshop Collective, Cresswell Lane; Hope Street Book Centre.
HAMILTON: SC sale every Sat 1-5pm outside Safeway shopping centre. For more info contact John Ford, 53 Eliot Crescent, Hamilton or Paul Youngson, 18 Forrest Crescent, Hamilton.

Wales

BANGOR: Sat 10-12 town centre.
CARDIFF: every Sat in Bute Town 10.30-12. Also available 1-0-8 Books, Salisbury Road.
NEWPORT: every Sat in town centre 11-12.30
PONTYPRIDD: SC sales every Sat outside Open Market 11-1pm.
SWANSEA: SC sales outside Co-op, Oxford St, 11am-1pm, Saturdays.

England

BATH: SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-3pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 20298 for more details.
BIRKENHEAD: SC on sale at Labour Club, Cleveland St, Thur nights; in precinct outside Littlewoods, Sat 11-12.
BIRMINGHAM: SC on sale at The Ramp, Fri 4.30-5.40, Sat 10-4. For more info phone 643-0669.
BOLSOVER: Cross Keys, every Fri 8.30pm, Bluebell 9-10.
BRADFORD: SC at Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate.
BRISTOL: SC on sale 11-1, 'Hole in Ground', Haymarket. More info Box 2, c/o Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Montpellier, Bristol 6.
BURNLEY: SC on sale every Sat morning 11.30-1pm St James St.
COVENTRY: SC available from Wedge Bookshop.
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD: SC sales in Time Square, Sat 10.30-1.30pm.
HUDDERSFIELD: SC sold Sat 11am-1pm. The Piazza. SC also available at Peaceworks.
LEEDS: Sat 11-1 at Lands Lane Pedestrian Precinct and 10.30-12.00 at Headingley Arndale Centre. Corner Bookshop, Woodhouse Lane.
LIVERPOOL: SC on sale from News from Nowhere, Whitechapel and Progressive Books, Berry St.
MANCHESTER: SC sold 11-1pm Sat at OLDHAM outside the Yorkshire Bank, High St; at BURY in the shopping precinct and at Metro Books; at BOLTON in the town centre; and in MANCHESTER at Gorton and Droylesden markets 11am-12.30 Sats and at Grassroots and Percivals

Bookshops

BANGOR: Rainbows, Holyhead Road, Upper Bangor, Gwynedd.
BRADFORD: Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Sandgate.
BRIGHTON: The Public House, Little Preston St.
BRISTOL: Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Bristol 6.
BIRMINGHAM: Other Bookshop, 137 Digbeth, Birmingham.
DURHAM: Durham City Co-op Bookshop, 85a New Elvet.
ILFORD: South Essex Bookshop, 335 Ley Street.
MILTON KEYNES: Oakleaf Books, 109 Church Street, Wolverton.
OXFORD: EOA Books, 34 Cowley Rd.
LEICESTER: Blackthorn Books, 70 High St, Leicester, and V Karia, 53A London Rd, Leicester.
LIVERPOOL: News from Nowhere, 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool L1.
LONDON: Central Books, 37 Grays

Order from SC, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

What's Left

RATES for What's Left. 5p per word or £4 per col inch. **Deadline: noon Sat prior to publication.** Payment in advance. Phone 01-359 8180.

SPARE BOOKS! Any books you don't want taking up valuable space on your bookshelves? Send them to the Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1 2XP.

BOBBY SANDS commemoration demo in Leeds, Wed 5 May, 6.30pm, Potternewton Park, Leeds 7. Coach tickets from Leeds to 8 May national march, £5 from TOM, Box 1969, 55 Cookridge St, Leeds 2.

Hackney Trades Council
 May Day greetings to trade unionists everywhere

Commemoration of Bobby Sands MP guest of honour Owen Carron MP plus other speakers. Thursday 6 May 7.30pm in the McNamara Room, the Irish Centre, Murray Street, Camden Town, NW1.

WOMEN in trade unions conference, Sat 8 May, 10-4.30pm, Transport House, Victoria St Bristol. Speakers include: Ivy Careon, Asst Gen. Sec. BIFU, Jackie Traylor, AUEW Hoover, Merthyr Tydfil, Women in Telecoms and NALGO typists. Workshops on: Positive action, sexual harassment at work, child care, low pay, new technology. Delegates and individuals welcome. Deis £2, 75p others.

RADICAL NURSES Conference, Park Heath Centre, Duke St, Sheffield 2, Sat 15 May 10am-2pm. All nurses welcome. More details 218 Heavygate Rd, Sheffield 10.

Battersea Trades Council
 May Day Greetings All Out against Tebbit!

Festival of Fun for Peace and Jobs Birmingham May Day '82

Highgate School, Balsall Heath, 12.30pm - 11.30pm
 Carnival Procession, Films, Discussions, Kid's Festival, Sports,
 Family Ticket £2.50 Individual £1.50;
 Unwaged £0.50.

SOLIDARITY WITH GRENADA: Conference Sat 8 May 10-4. Speakers, workshops, film and exhibition. The English Centre, Sutherland St, SW1. Tickets £1 from Britain-Grenada Friendship Society, 68 Grays Inn Bldgs, Rosebery Ave, London EC1R 4RR.

Letters letters Letters

Weakness on Malvinas?

CAN ANYONE seriously believe that the Thatcher Government wants a war with Argentina? What have the British capitalists to gain from such a conflict? Your coverage of the dispute has assumed that the UK is an ascendent imperialist power out to defend and increase its territorial control of key parts of the globe.

Similarly, Brian Grogan's analysis (15 April) quotes Trotsky in 1938 with a hypothetical analogy of a war between Brazil and the UK in which socialists would support down-trodden Brazil, in order to unleash the dynamics of socialist revolution.

The real weakness in this scheme, of course, is

that you are mechanically plucking out formulas from a bygone age and debate and trying to impose them on a more complex and changed reality.

Britain's foreign policy since 1945, excepting the Suez aberration, has been one of rapid de-colonisation. Indeed key Tory statesmen, Macleod and Carrington for example, have built successful careers out of getting rid of the Empire as quickly and cheaply as possible.

They have understood the necessity of a rapid transition from Empire backed by big conventional forces, to a more modest nuclear role for Britain under the US umbrella. Yet, if we accept Grogan's analysis of the UK being a traditional imperialist power bent on subjugating Argentina as correct, how can one

possibly explain the universal rapture that greeted Carrington's 'Rhodesian solution'?

Remember, this solution was featured by the coming to power of a 'Marxist government'. For Thatcher the name of the game is saving face — not imperialist aggrandisement.

Socialists have to be clear, a victory for Galtieri means strengthening the junta and no-one else. Ironically, a victory for the task force could well lead to destabilising the junta, stimulate workers' opposition to military rule, and create better conditions for the islanders to exercise their right to self-determination — which surely must be the key principal involved for all socialists.

ARTHUR MOWATT
 Manchester

Editor reserves the right to cut any letter over 400 words.
 Write to SC letters, c/o PO Box 50, London N1



Argentinian woman protesting 'disappearance' of her child. The placard reads: 'The Malvinas are Argentinian, the disappeared are too'.

Congratulations!

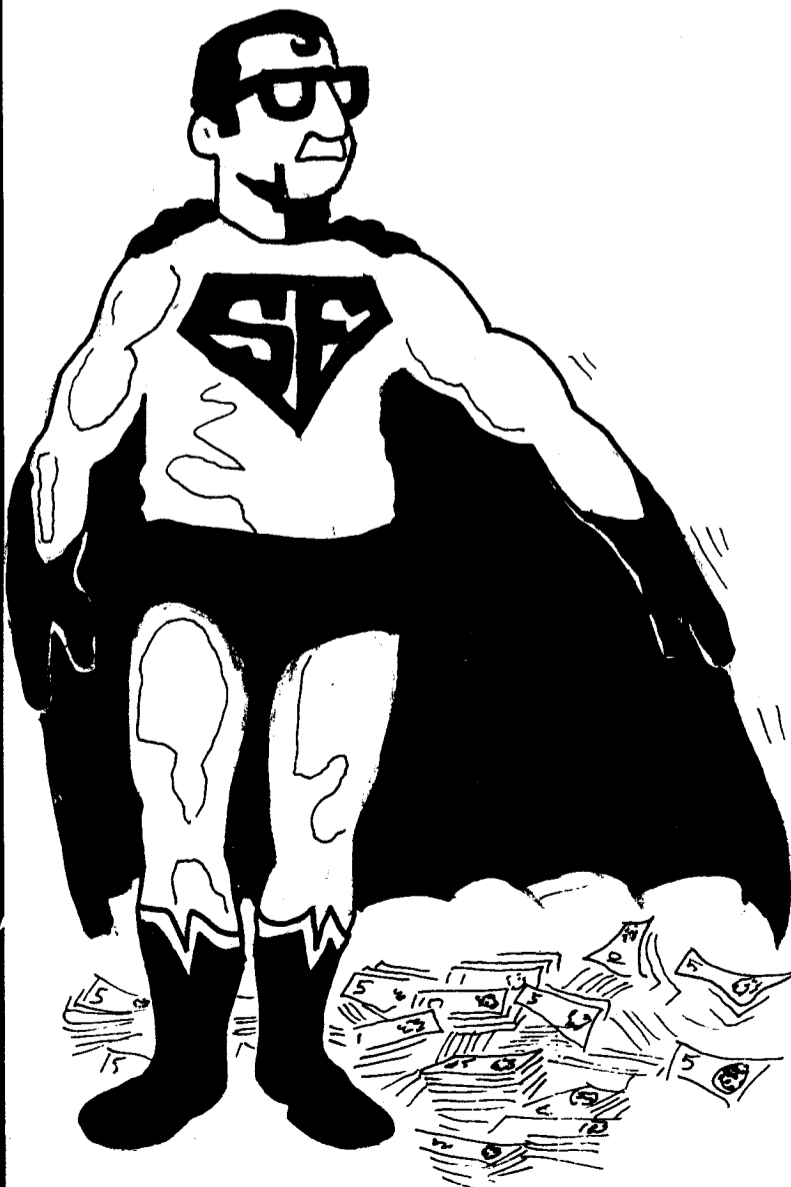
The following letter was sent to Joan Maynard MP about the Socialist Challenge meeting on the Malvinas.

Dear Ms Maynard, Congratulations to you and all the others concerned on the meeting tomorrow night to protest against Thatcher's

war plans in the South Atlantic — and perhaps elsewhere also. I regret that I shall not be able to be present, but I enclose the sum of £5 towards the work.

Name and address supplied

Socialist Challenge FUND DRIVE '82



'Without revolutionary finance, no revolutionary movement'*

PICTURED here is Superfinancier. Normally disguised as a modest bespectacled newspaper reporter, he swings into action whenever the class struggle calls.

Throughout the Laurence Scott strike he financed solidarity activity. He poured in money for leaflets, pamphlets and public meetings in support of CND and the El Salvador campaign.

When British imperialism sent its fleet to the South Atlantic he was instrumental in the first public meeting in opposition. His agents all over the country are building Reagan Reception Committees to ensure a massive turnout when US imperialism's chieftain visits Britain.

And he's striving to ensure the success of the Women's Right to Work festival on 5 June, helping to build a revolutionary tendency in the LPYS and fighting to defend the Bradford 12 victims of a police frame-up.

Most important, every Tuesday evening he delivers fistfuls of money to impoverished Socialist Challenge designers in a north London basement to ensure that the paper comes out.

But there's a problem. Superfinancier has disappeared. Some people now even claim that he never existed! They believe that Socialist Challenge and its activities are actually financed by the donations of its supporters and sympathisers. Clear-minded socialists will recognise these claims for what they are.

Superfinancier will be found again. But in the meantime our finances are very low. We have to make an immediate concession to those who think Superfinancier doesn't exist. Without it, we will be in very serious trouble within a matter of days. So dig deeply into your pockets pronto! If not, even the return of Superfinancier will not save us!

* V.I. Superfinancier: The Impending Financial Catastrophe and How to Combat it. Fulltime publications 1982.

Our thanks this week to:		
Malvinas meeting	97.39	Total 285.45
Newcastle	51.00	Total so far 1025.91
L Wadstedt	3.00	
John S Hackney	1.00	
Hillingdon	30.00	Target for quarter 15,990.00
Bolsover	18.56	Weekly target 1,230.76
Anon	5.00	Shortfall so far 2,666.37
Misc	2.50	

POLITICAL MUSIC NOT MACHO MEGA-STARS!

Music for Socialism

MUSIC FOR SOCIALISM (MFS) is a Hackney-based group who are breaking out from their local base to organise the music for the 1 May festival in Victoria Park. They've put together a wide range of radical bands — *Talisman, Tour de Force, Ivory Coasters, Swells, Oxy and the Morons* and *To the Finland Station*. It will be interesting to see whether the politics comes across more effectively than at the grander Rock Against Racism/Anti Nazi League carnivals. Rock Against Racism (RAR) and No Nukes Music are broad based in their approach to music. But MFS seem to have a critique. Simon Lockwood spoke to *Jane Watt* from MFS.

Tell us where MFS came from.

About three years ago we started as Hackney RAR to put on name bands at local venues to push the politics across. Through our experiences in RAR we became a lot more politicised and as this happened certain problems in our approach became apparent.

First we felt that we weren't getting any politics across. There was also a problem with bands who were still into the stardom bit. We weren't confident to take on bands about their role as 'stars'.

So the bands weren't being co-operative towards the aims of RAR?

Yes, but the aims of RAR were not well defined. The bands thought they were doing their bit for anti-racism by playing there for us. They thought for us to take them up on other issues was just nit-picking. We were always in a defensive position.

So it's fair to say that you found it necessary to prioritise anti-sexism over anti-racism?

The women involved always found that with RAR anyway, but the anti-sexism of the men developed through seeing the sexist nature of the pop industry.

This obviously contrasts heavily with the current approach of RAR where their expensive black artists often have dubious attitudes?

Yes. MFS may not be getting huge bands but we're in a position to be positive about what we are doing.

So MFS would only put on bands who were socialists?

Very definitely. We are not putting on each gig for a campaign rather than setting ourselves up as a little group with pure ideals. Rather than organising gigs as straight benefits we encourage the campaign to be involved throughout the gig as a focus.

What's the audience reaction been? Have you been successful in politicising gigs?

Yeah, we put out leaflets breaking down the mechanics of the gig, demystifying it. People read them and ask about MFS.

Because we're much more selective the atmosphere of the gigs is much less oppressive. Instead of pandering to the whims of rock stars, with us providing the sandwiches and the hero-worship, we are setting out an evening's entertainment where every act is seen as of the same importance.



Do you think that the RAR carnivals weren't the success they were made out to be?

Definitely. People largely just went along to see the bands. I think there was a lot of self-delusion on the left. It was assumed that because people went to see The Clash at a RAR gig they automatically became politicised — which is a lot of rubbish!

You're talking about image, the way rock stars diminish the politics of an event..

Yes, we also want to fight how bands act on stage. When The Clash appeared they acted the role of mega-stars. Very macho. We wouldn't book bands who acted in a macho way on stage.

Are any MFS members in another political organisation?

We're mostly members of the Labour Party. Music for socialism has the ideas to make an important contribution to political culture in this country over the next few years. It'll be very interesting to see its development. Our Victoria Park gig kicks off at 2pm on 1 May and goes on to 8.30pm — and look out for our other smaller benefits.

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Lenin on oppressed nations and imperialism

By Connie Allen

THE CONFLICT between Britain and Argentina points up the importance of an understanding of imperialism. As Lenin explained in *The Revolutionary Proletariat and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination*, the starting point for revolutionaries must be 'the division of nations into oppressor and oppressed, which forms the essence of imperialism, and is deceitfully evaded by the social-chauvinists ...

'This division is not significant from the angle of bourgeois pacifism or the philistine Utopia of peaceful competition among independent nations under capitalism, but it is most significant from the angle of the revolutionary struggle against imperialism.'

And, as Lenin emphasised, revolutionaries always support colonial and semicolonial countries that are in battle with imperialism. Britain is one of the oldest imperialist powers. Today, while a weaker imperialist power than the United States, it maintains huge investments around the world, including in Argentina.

In 1916 Lenin used Argentina as an example

of British economic domination of a semicolony. In his book *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, he explained that in 1909 the amount of British capital invested in Argentina was estimated 'at 8,750 million francs. It is not difficult to imagine what strong connections British finance capital (and its faithful "friend" diplomacy) thereby acquires with the Argentine bourgeoisie,

with the circles that control the whole of that country's economic and political life.'

It is important to be able to distinguish between imperialist countries and those that are pawns of the imperialists. In a conflict between an imperialist power and a semicolonial country — even one suffering under a brutal dictatorship — revolutionaries take the side of the oppressed nation.

As Lenin explained, there are big and little imperialist countries. And just as larger capitalist companies take advantage of smaller ones, the strongest imperialist powers use their might against weaker ones.

Working people have no interest in the defense of any imperialist power, weak or strong. Its very existence as an imperialist power is based on the exploitation of the colonial and semicolonial world as well as its own working class at home.



And in the colonial world there are many differences, too. Some countries, like Argentina, are more developed. Others are poorer, or lack even formal independence, like Puerto Rico. Today Argentina remains a semicolony despite its industrialisation, and must therefore be defended against British imperialism.

The importance of

defending the colonial and semicolonial world against imperialism becomes even more crucial during a war. The history of revolutionary great mass of dispossessed (the colonial world) to be free represents one of the two great progressive forces in modern society. The other is the struggle of the proletariat in the advanced countries for its emancipation. In their revolutionary socialism is one of



ARGUMENTS for SOCIALISM

consistent defence of the oppressed. The First International Conference for the Fourth International, the world Trotskyist organisation, held in 1936, stated in an antiwar resolution:

'The struggle against war, properly understood and executed, presupposes the uncompromising hostility of the proletariat and its organisations, always and everywhere, toward its own and every other imperialist bourgeoisie.'

As the second worldwide imperialist war grew, the International reaffirmed its position at an Emergency Conference of the Fourth International in May 1940.

'The striving of this

successful interaction lies the key to the entire strategy of the world socialist revolution. Nationalism in the West (imperialist countries) is a tool of capitalist power, a weapon used to pit exploited peoples against each other in wars fought by military and economic means for exclusive capitalist interests.

In the colonial countries of the East, the resolution said, 'the nationalist movements form an integral part of the struggle against world imperialism. As such they must be supported to the fullest possible extent by the working class of the entire Western world.' From *Militant*, a revolutionary socialist paper published in New York.

KICK OUT THE TORIES

BOB MELLISH

Who are the true supporters of Labour?



Bob Mellish: gone too far even for the likes of Foot

By Tessa van Gelderen

BOB MELLISH, Bermondsey MP who did a deal with Michael Foot in stopping Peter Tatchell from being the constituency's parliamentary candidate, has come out in his true colours. He has called for a vote for a candidate in the local elections who is standing against Labour.

Coral Newall is a councillor for Southwark but she has not been reelected by the local party. Still a member of the Labour Party, she is standing in the forthcoming elections on a 'Independent Labour and tenants association' ticket. She has managed to find two like minded people who are not even in the Labour Party.

Bob Mellish, as reported in that organ of truth, *South London Press*, came out in support of all three candidates

under the headline *Mellish says: 'Don't vote Labour'*.

This is the man whom Foot and Kinnoch are so keen to stay on as MP, the man who insisted that Peter Tatchell not be endorsed by the national executive or he would resign. This is the man who supports the witch-hunting of party activists and the inquiry into the *Militant* tendency.

Foot and Kinnoch openly support Mellish who has shown himself to be rapidly anti-Labour

while they continue to attack members who fight inside the party for socialist policies, members such as Peter Tatchell and Pat Wall.

Hidden

This time even Mellish has gone too far and he sent a letter to the same rag stating that he only supported Coral Newall. Although this is still against the constitution of the party, this backtracking on Mellish's part was hidden away on the inside of the paper while his previous position had been blazoned across the front page.

Nor did he retract statements attributed to him in the national press that he 'didn't give a two-

penny damn about Bermondsey Labour Party'. Presumably if he had been 'misquoted' in the first place he would have demanded equal prominence to his reply.

Don Shiack, chairperson of Bermondsey Labour Party, told Socialist Challenge that the constituency had made its views plain to both regional and national offices and to Foot himself that this was not the way for a Labour MP to behave.

The local party, while it will no doubt deal with Coral Newall after the election in an appropriate manner, cannot take up the case against Bob Mellish. He is in fact a member of West Lewisham party and the chairperson there has been informed.

Mellish must be chuckling to himself at the mess the Labour Party has got itself in. Labour Party members should insist now more than ever before that

Peter Tatchell be endorsed as the official candidate. The longer that is delayed that more that Bob Mellish and his cohorts appear to have the authority to speak on behalf of the Labour Party.

... meanwhile in Islington even the Social Democrats, who claimed to have left the Labour Party because of the 'extremism of the left' have been forced to expel members who have stood against official SDP candidates.

The expulsion of the nine was confirmed by a special sub-committee headed by Bill Rodgers. It is the end of an era of chicanery both in the Labour Party and the SDP. The nine just didn't know when they were well off in the Labour Party. Bob Mellish probably knows that the Labour Party is far more tolerant of right wingers like himself, than the SDP.

Labour councils: Lessons of the GLC

By Tessa van Gelderen

'The new council will have no alternative but to lead a massive and continuing campaign against the government and speed the election of a Labour government.'

'We will seek to unite Labour local authorities and the trade union movement in a mass campaign to bring down this government and the system it represents at the earliest possible opportunity.'

One year separates these two statements and much water has flowed under the bridge in that time. The first was said by Ken Livingstone, now leader of the GLC, before the elections last May.

The second was part of a statement published in the April issue of *London Labour Briefing* and signed by many Labour candidates for the local elections — as well as GLC councillors, including Ken Livingstone.

decided upon by the Greater London Labour Party. It failed to decrease the price of school dinners, it sold council houses, and despite decreasing the fares on London Transport, it has just increased them by 100 per cent after the Law Lords' ruling.

Head

It has been the fares issue above all else that has brought matters to a head. The left has been thrown into disarray as to what is the best strategy to adopt.

Last year, at the *London Labour Briefing* conference a policy of 'disengagement' was adopted. This was to refuse to carry out Tory cuts by letting go the reins of office and letting chaos ensue.

Yet the Labour group on the GLC could not bring itself to vote against the budget which contained the fares increases on the grounds that this would make the budget 'illegal'.



Photo: GM COOKSON



Whatever their honourable intentions, neither Ted Knight nor Ken Livingstone can carry out election promises without a firm base in the labour movement

That is the crunch of the matter. There is no doubt that the GLC has been faced with a most vicious and sustained onslaught from both the press and the Tories, directly through the penalties imposed by Heseltine as well as the verdicts handed down by the courts.

Issue

The real issue at stake for both the GLC and all left councillors and councils elected next week is not what parts of the manifesto get defeated, but how the left take on the government. It has been the GLC voting for these cuts at the same time as refusing to organise 'a massive and continuing campaign against the government' — as Ken

Livingstone put it — that has been the GLC's undoing.

And of course, it is very difficult for people like Ken Livingstone to lead such a campaign when they vote for Tory cuts. Nor is it enough to plead, as Lambeth Council leader, Ted Knight, is wont to do, that the problem is that the labour movement, in particular the trade unions, are not outside the town halls waiting to give support.

Tories

At a time when workers are increasingly under attack from the Tories, when union leaders have failed to give a lead in the fightback, the left in the Labour Party has to make a stand. On every

issue, fares, school dinners, council house sales, and so on, the Labour group should have voted to carry out its manifesto pledges and have carried that fight into the workplaces, as well as trade union and Labour Party branches.

Norm

This is a decisive break from the 'campaigning' that is the norm inside the Labour Party. Immediately after the Denning judgment huge demonstrations and rallies should have been organised, the Law Lords should have been picketed and lobbied.

More important, the GLC should have established close organisational and political links with the rank and file leaders of the union, that

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Retreat

The statement does recognise that the GLC has been 'forced to retreat on a number of issues'. There is at present much bitterness and acrimony inside the Labour left in London over what is regarded as betrayal in left councillors on the GLC.

Ken Livingstone has been the main target of these attacks. The GLC has failed over and over again to carry out promises made in the manifesto which was

is the shop stewards and convenors, particularly those in the council and transport unions.

Not only are they the best allies in the fight that has to come against this government, they are in fact the only ones who can bring Thatcher finally to her knees.

Labour councillors should carry out their promises not to make cuts. That means a freezing (if not reduction) of rents and rates and not a job to be lost. Trade unionists may

to be too disillusioned to support such actions the first time around, but there is no other option if they are to be convinced that this time, the Labour Party means business.

for
**A WOMAN'S
RIGHT TO WORK
DEMONSTRATE
5 JUNE**

No sex please, this is Reaganland ...

By Tessa van Gelderen

YOUNG WOMEN under 18 in the United States will be turned away from family planning clinics if either parent objects to them receiving contraceptives.

This will be the result of Ronald Reagan's new laws where clinics will be obliged to inform parents and which are being introduced for 'the good of teenagers'.

Only prescription contraceptives such as the Pill, diaphragm and IUD come under the new rules, which means that young women's parents would be told but young men's would not.

This is just one more in a series of attacks on women's rights under the Reagan administration. There is a strong protest movement against this

change in the law which many people believe will only result in increased pregnancies and abortions.

The American Medical Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the American Academy of Pediatrics and even Girls' Clubs of America and the YWCA have joined forces in opposition.

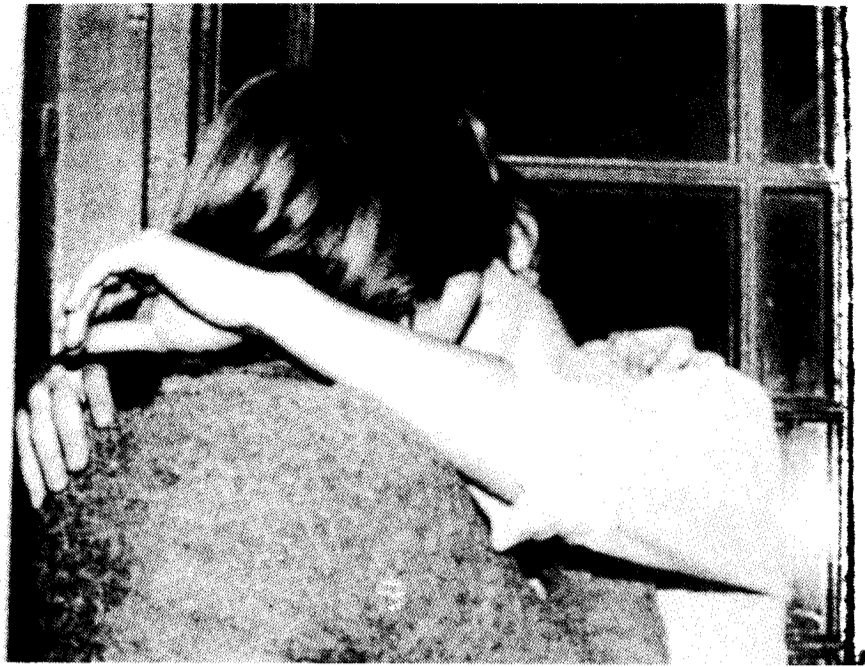
But it is doubtful if Reagan will change his mind as he continues to pour money into obscurities like the war drive while he tries to herald in his new 'morality'.

Morality new style USA 1

THE dangers of tampons causing toxic shock syndrome has not been in the news lately. But last week, Proctor and Gamble were ordered to pay \$300,000 to the family of a woman who suffered from it. The jury in Iowa, USA, found the company negligent after the woman had used its Rely tampons.

Morality new style USA 2

A MAN in Washington DC received only 90 days in jail for the rape of a five year old girl. The light sentence was because in the judge's view the girl had been 'promiscuous' when she jumped on top of the man who was sleeping nude. 'I am satisfied we have an unusually sexually promiscuous young lady. He did not know how to refuse.' The judge's explanation for her 'promiscuity' was that she had seen her mother and the man having sex.



...but we're British

By S Weller

IF YOU are under 16 and want contraception, there's no problem — unless you're a woman. Even at supposedly 'progressive' clinics, sexist, patronising attitudes still prevail.

As I am 15, I had to see a counsellor, which was a farce in itself. 'But dear, why do you want to have sex? Is it just inquisitiveness? Are you sure you're not being pressured?'

It was not enough for me to say that I wanted to have sex because I wanted to — I had to justify

myself. I was asked if a two month long relationship was sufficient for me to know what I wanted. 'But why don't you wait till you're 16, dear?' The counsellor looked very miffed when I said that I wouldn't be going out with him then!

There was also the warning against the perils of

'casual' sex and the pressure on me to tell my mother. My experience in that clinic confirmed to me that this society is totally against the rights of women and youth to rule our own lives. No wonder so many young women become pregnant.

There is continual threats to our abortion rights. The aim is obviously to put us at the mercy of our own bodily functions, with no right to

control our bodies. I don't want to live in fear of pregnancy. I want the right to live my own life the way I choose.

That's why I'll be at the Women's Festival organised by the Labour Party on 5 June — fighting for a Woman's Right to Work and a Woman's Right to Choose. We defeated the Tories over the Corrie Bill. We can do it again.

Hiving off council services - around the country

Merseyside

By John Nolan,
Birkenhead Labour
Party

A KEY ISSUE being raised in local elections this year is the Tory plans to hive off essential public services to private contractors. Having made every effort to get rid of council house stock, local Tories are trying to emulate their bosses in Westminster who are selling off the

large bits of the nationalised industries. The Tories are not alone in these plans. The experiences of Liverpool City Council, led by the Liberals, indicate that the Alliance will follow the same path as the Tories. But the labour movement is fighting back.

Not content with all the massive cuts they have made in local services, the Liverpool Liberals and the Wirral Tories are trying to sell off essential services to any cowboy firms that make low enough bids. But they are facing increasingly organised action by Merseyside trade unionists.

A mass meeting called by the Liverpool joint shop stewards committee on Monday of last week voted overwhelmingly to take strike action to defend jobs and services, to campaign for a reversal of all cuts, to refuse to cover for vacant posts, to refuse co-operation with privatisation moves and to give full support to workers across the Mersey in Wirral against Tory cuts and privateering.

Trade unionists working for Wirral's Tory council formed the Wirral Joint Union Committee six months ago when the Tories threatened to

repeat the disastrous experience of Southend. There the council brought in the Exclusive Cleaning Group headed by David Evans, a Tory councillor, after they had already been turned down by Tory councils like Bracknell as being too expensive.

Despite evidence from their own management services that the Direct Works is cheaper than private contractors, Wirral Tories have given notice to 150 painters, joiners and electricians. They are also running down all school cleaning, caretaking and meal services, threatening hundreds more sackings over the next year.

On Wednesday 21 April, the WJUC called for a one day strike for which there was wide support. All the cleansing depots were closed, so were the maintenance depots and many more of face workers refused to cross the picket lines.

In the afternoon the march from the centre of Birkenhead to Wallasey led by the Labour group on the council was swelled to more than 1000 by a big contingent of supporters brought over by the Liverpool City joint shop stewards committee.

At the mass rally at the end of the march, Labour councillors pledged themselves to reverse the Tories' decisions if elected to office in May and withdraw all redundancy notices.

However, the possibility after May is of a 'hung council' on both sides of the Mersey with the Liberal/SDP Alliance holding the balance and continuing Tory policies. Labour will have to call for all out strike action to smash these bosses' policies and for all out strike action against the Tebbit bill which will make such strike action illegal.



Last week Socialist Challenge looked at developments in the London Borough of Wandsworth (latest situation p14). This week we examine events in two districts of Merseyside — the Wirral and Liverpool city itself — and in Bury, Greater Manchester.

Bury, Greater Manchester

By Ian Stephenson,
Bury NALGO branch
secretary and Mark
Hackett, Bury
NALGO president

THE LONG running dispute on who runs the refuse collection and associated services in Bury is in moth balls and may be dead for ever. Strong united trade union action has halted the plans of the council to follow in the footsteps of Southend and privatise Bury's services.

From day one that the plans became known all the unions involved — NALGO, TGWU, AUEW & NUPE—joined together to oppose the scheme. NALGO refused to co-operate with the contracting out of public services. Any member threatened with victimisation was promised full support from the Joint Union Committee.

Leader of the council,

Albert Little, ignored the unions' views and advertised for tenders for the refuse collection. The unions issued a statement that they would call all their members out on indefinite strike in the department affected by the council's proposals.

The prospect of rubbish accumulating in the streets in the middle of an election prompted the councillors to meet the unions — for the first time on this issue. After eight hours of negotiations agreement was reached just a day before the strike was due to start.

The Council has suffered a humiliating defeat. They have been forced to retreat on a definite commitment to privatisation. Meanwhile the unions are stronger than ever before and their victory in this dispute has strengthened them for other battles ahead.

Tories attack injury benefits

Bob Moody, NUM Notts Area Executive (in personal capacity)

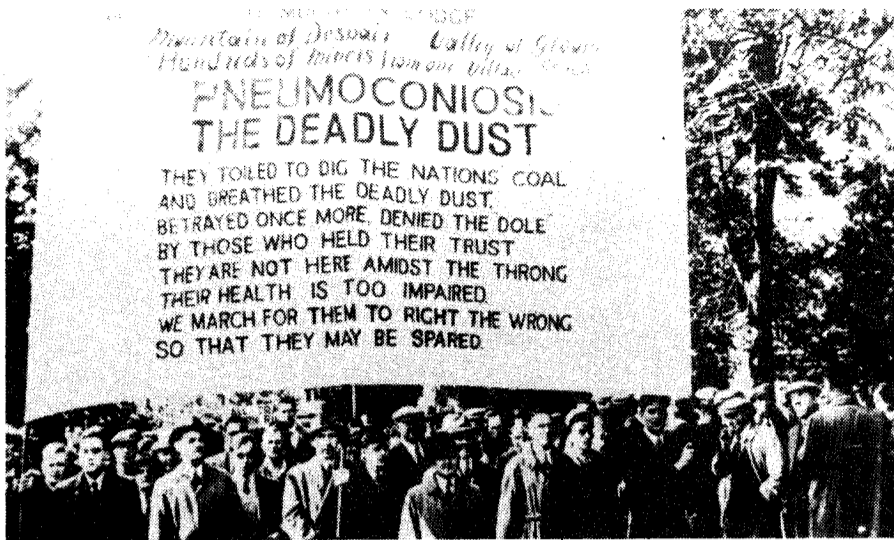
This Tory Government has no interest in the health of working class people, a fact underlined by its proposed 'reform' of the Industrial Injuries Scheme. The Tories' latest move is a Green Paper. Currently at the Committee stage, which would decimate industrial injuries benefits and effectively abolish the Special Hardship Allowance.

The basic effect of Special Hardship Allowance is to partially maintain the earnings of workers who have been forced to take less well-paid jobs as a result of injuries sustained at work. In the mine, for example, a face worker who is injured and redeployed to a lighter job could lose more than £30 a week in wages. The Special Hardship Allowance gets him maybe £10 a week on top of his new, lower, wage.

Certainly, this isn't ideal. The NUM is committed to full rate protection — no one should lose any money as a result of industrial injury. What is more, Special Hardship

living standards. The scrapping of Special Hardship Allowance and the general attack on industrial injuries is an attack on all industrial workers. This must be taken up by all the unions concerned — coal, rail, steel, dockers. Given the right lead we can resist, oppose and finally defeat the

Notts Area NUM has in the past been called 'moderate' and 'parochial'. Given the right leadership, that can be changed. Rank and file Notts miners and some Area Council delegates are calling for a mass lobby of Parliament as a first step towards action against this attack on working class



living standards. The scrapping of Special Hardship Allowance and the general attack on industrial injuries is an attack on all industrial workers. This must be taken up by all the unions concerned — coal, rail, steel, dockers. Given the right lead we can resist, oppose and finally defeat the

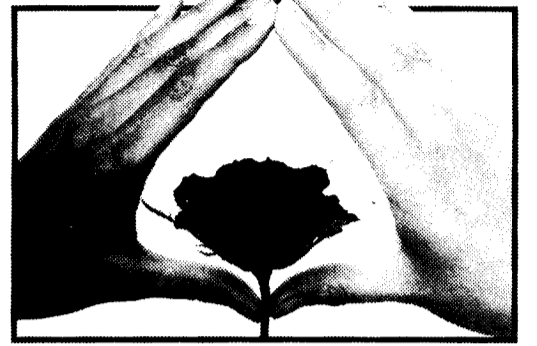
'reforms'. Hopefully this will be part of a national campaign against this government and to further the interests of working class people.

Workers should make this simple comparison. Compare how the Tory Government treats injured or disabled workers with how it treats the chairpeo-

ple of nationalised industries and its top civil servants. Whilst we are to be deprived of benefits after a lifetime in our industry, the chosen few enjoy tax free perks, golden handshakes and index-linked pensions.

Maggie certainly looks after her own. And so should we.

WOMEN'S FESTIVAL



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WOMEN'S RIGHTS TO JOBS & EQUALITY



Wandsworth 'dust' strike gains support

By D Benlow, branch secretary Wandsworth branch NUPE in his personal capacity

COUNCIL workers in Wandsworth, South London are continuing their strike against the Tory council plans to privatise the 'dust' and other services.

Tory leader, Christopher Chope, has brought in scab private contractors to collect the dust during the dispute. But picketing has been so effective that they and Pritchards, a private company already operating the street cleansing service, have to go as far as Gravesend — over 30 miles away — to dispose of their rubbish.

Impressive unity has been built between manual and white collar workers in the dispute. The local government union, NALGO, has pulled out its Town Hall telephonists and are leaving phones off the hook in response to the hiring of agency telephonists despite Tory threats of suspension.

Council workers in other boroughs have refused to cross picket lines.

A one day all-London strike against privatisation and in solidarity with the Wandsworth dustworkers is being proposed for 10 May at the London Local Authority Joint Union Shop Stewards Committee this week.

The initial response of many local Labour Party members to the strike was hostile, believing that the council workers had fallen into a Tory trap by taking industrial action during the election period and thereby jeopardising Labour's chances of winning.

However the party has been forced to take sides and

18 Labour candidates, including Tony Belton the leader of the Labour group and three Labour GLC councillors have now issued statements of support.

What is needed now is active support from the Labour Party for the strike rather than concentration on routine election work.

Only by doing this can Labour clearly differentiate itself from the SDP/Liberal Alliance, who are taking a

demagogic anti-privatisation stand while of course keeping all their options open.

Last week's SC report erroneously stated that Pritchard's had sacked 58 workers after three years of operation.

In fact, they have sacked over 100 workers or two-thirds of their workforce since they started on 1 February this year.

Brian Grogan spoke to Cliff Williams, youth delegate to the AUEW National Committee

TERRY DUFFY's opening address to the engineering union conference in Eastbourne set the character of the whole National Committee. He made preposterous claims that he and other right wing leaders had done everything to meet Thatcher's attacks on the working class — and blamed the membership for the actual record of capitulation.

This scabbing record of the Duffy leadership in numerous battles where the membership was raring to go at, for example British Leyland, Fords and especially Laurence Scott's, seems to have escaped the attention of the right wing majority.

'The right wing voted like clockwork' explained Cliff Williams, a youth delegate to the National Committee. The youth unfortunately are not allowed a vote.

'A typical example of Duffy's approach was his explanation of the union's attitude to Tebbit's anti-union laws. He was at great pains to distance himself from the militancy once endorsed by the union against the 1971 Industrial Relations Act. "Many of you will recall that we had tremendous fragmentation in the battle," claimed Duffy. But this was not the way that the rest of the world recalled the events. Militant action actually smashed the Act. This, of course, is what Duffy wants desperately to avoid. Duffy's support for "unity" is support to do nothing.'

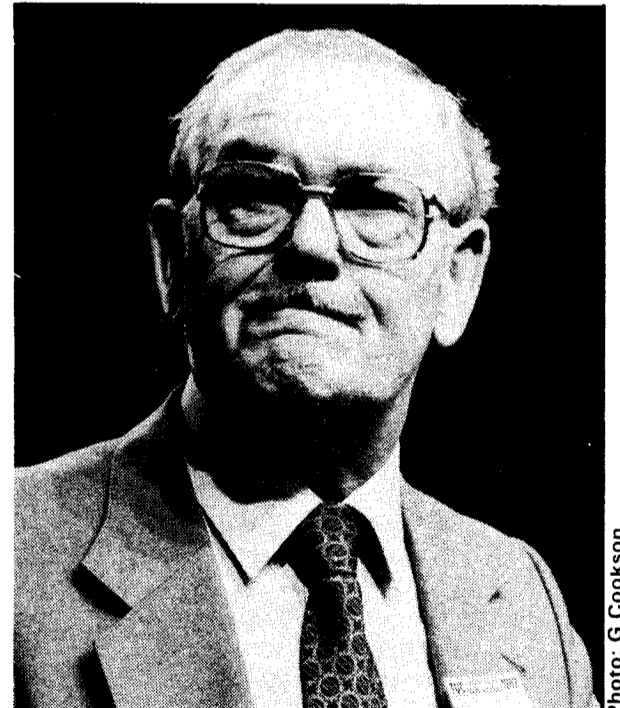
The tactics of the left in most cases played into the right wing's hands. 'The strategy of the left is based on trying to win the right wing to supporting some of their resolutions. They therefore have to lean over backwards to ensure they don't upset the right wing.

This is disaster. The only way to divide the right wing is to stand on the shoulders of the mobilisations and militant actions of the membership. This means putting the emphasis on organising the ranks, not manoeuvring at NC's,' said Cliff.

Accordingly, on most issues, the right wing got its majority of 56 to 35. 'However, on an issue where there is clear mass resistance — like for example against any witch-hunt in the Labour Party — the right wing block was broken,' explained Cliff. Duffy's resolution calling for the re-introduction of the proscribed list was passed only by the slenderest of majorities.

'The left failed to centre in on the membership's discontent over the scabbing on the Laurence Scott dispute. It allowed the right wing to rest on its record over Plessey's. The official backing extended here was a direct result of the Laurence Scott battle. But worse, by not focussing on Laurence Scott, the left allowed the question of wages to be separated out from that of fighting unemployment. Duffy has played on the unemployed situation to avoid a wages fight over the past two years.'

The left's push for a concrete figure of £15 for skilled grades was predictably defeated in favour of a vaguely worded resolu-



Duffy — using unemployment to avoid a fight on the wages front

tion for a 'substantial increase'. This formula gives the right wing room to accept a wage cut for the third year running.

Duffy was quite explicit: 'This decision gives me the elasticity I need in bargaining with the Engineering Employers Federation. We know that in the present economic circumstances, the bargaining will be tough.'

'This need for a "leeway" for Duffy was backed up by the right wing delegates in their speeches,' said Cliff. 'But the economic climate has been allowed to develop through the sort of inaction and stabs in the back that Duffy and his crew have been guilty of. It's a self-fulfilling prophecy.'

Nothing can be expected from the right wing

leaders in fighting the Tories. But Duffy's attempts to claim a fighting record, and statements that he will go for a claim 'at least in line with inflation' show that the pressure of the membership is on them.

'What this NC has shown so far', Cliff concluded, 'is that passing resolutions is not the be-all-and-end-all. The left has to use the National Committee as a platform from which they can have a political discussion with the membership. This means we need clear radical and distinct policies based on fighting to mobilise for mass action and backing any fight that develops. These should then be used to rebuild the left in the union.'

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Mass support for Kigass strikers

THE THIRD WEEK of strike action by 120 women workers for union recognition and improved pay and conditions at Kigass engineering works in Leamington and Warwick has brought excellent support from the local labour movement.

Last Saturday a mass picket organised by the Coventry West District Committee of the engineering union, AUEW was supported by 100 trade unionists including representatives of the Rolls Royce Joint Shop Stewards Committee and shop stewards from the Talbot car factory in Coventry.

This display of solidarity caused the boss, Arthur Wardman, to rush about taking a film and tape recording of pickets trying to prevent about ten scab workers entering the plant.

During the week, trade union support has increased with blacking of Kigass products, workplace collections and regular visits to the picket line. AUEW shop stewards at Automotive Products have decided to hold a weekly collection which has already raised £400. Total donations from the labour movement to the strike fund now top £1000.

In response to this support Wardman has offered an extra £8 per week, still £9 less than the Employers Federation standards rate. The strikers have responded by demanding union recognition and a living wage. The Equal Opportunities Commission has now approached the management after complaints of discrimination against the women workers.

The women, who joined the AUEW in the last few months, are now involved in their second strike within two months and this time they are determined to win. The AUEW has made the strike official and has attempted to black the firm's products, which are made on a sub-contract basis for Fords and Rolls Royce, amongst others.

The women have a list of major grievances including wages, health and safety and canteen facilities. Current take-home pay ranges from £32

to £42 for a 40 hour week. Although the firm is a member of the Engineering Employers' Federation it doesn't pay the Federation rate of £69 per week and is refusing to give recognition rights to the AUEW.

None of the women had ever been on strike before these two strikes and have little or no background of union activities. They have quickly organised effective picketing during the day, a strike committee and a strike fund.

It is a significant dispute in many ways: firstly the owner has a record of anti-trade unionism, having fought a long and bitter dispute with members of ASTMS and TASS at another of his factories three years ago. Secondly, it is very noticeable that the strikers are all women and every day about 12 skilled male workers cross the picket line, showing that women can be at the forefront of trade union fights, as has been shown at Lee Jeans and Plessey.

Messages of support and donations to: Mrs E Stanford, 77 St Helens Road, Leamington Spa, Warks.



None of the Kigass women have been on strike before

Scottish TUC declares solidarity with Solidarnosc By Pat Brown

THE HIGH POINT of the Scottish TUC at its annual meeting last week was its decision to back solidarity with Solidarnosc, the independent Polish trade union, and reject right wing attempts to ban contacts with East European trade unions in protest against the Polish military regime.

In addition the STUC took major policy discussions on the fight against the Tebbit Bill, nuclear disarmament, incomes policy, women's rights and the Scottish Assembly

The STUC is different from the British TUC in that about 100 of the 580 delegates are elected from Trades Councils, who, being more closely in touch with the rank and file of the labour movement tend to become a militant minority voice at conference.

The leadership of the STUC continues to reflect the close political relationship between the Communist Party and the Labour Party left. The platform therefore generally gets its own way, using the block vote and getting remitted anything which it doesn't feel confident in winning.

Tory attacks on the unions through the Tebbit Bill attracted the greatest number of resolutions and followed a STUC conference earlier in the month of 2,200 shop stewards and other officials which launched its campaign against the Bill.

Accordingly, the STUC went somewhat further than the TUC plan of (in)action adopted in early April. Thus, although it did not make any precise calls for action, it did all for the withdrawal of union representation from tripartite industrial bodies (although it refused a demand to withdraw from all bodies involving the government).

Miners' leader, Mick McGahey again warned the Coal Board that 'if they bring one non-unionist into the industry that will be their full man-

power.' The time has come for 'agitation and aggressive action'.

Bob Gillepsie of the print union, SOGAT, said that not every union was as close knit as the Scottish miners, but Mr McGahey was right, that all should be getting ready to involve their members in industrial action against the legislation.

One of the big policy questions for the next Labour government is the attitude of the unions to incomes policy. The STUC left no doubt about its position.

The motion opposing all forms of incomes policy and supporting high wages was overwhelmingly supported with some vigorous attacks on right wing leaders.

They were slammed for 'audacity', 'arrogance' and 'divisiveness' for trying to drag incomes policy back onto the labour movement's agenda.

Particularly attacked was Sid Weighell of the railworkers union.

One delegate said: 'It is a disgrace that some people who are positively pleading for unity are at the same time trying to saddle us again with pay restraint, and just when workers are suffering the worst onslaught they have ever faced from the Tories.'

Jim Mortimer, Labour's new general secretary, appealed for unity around a four point campaign which he said could win the next general

election.

These were the alternative economic policy; the repeal of the Tebbit laws and strengthening of trade union rights; 'left the shackles of the Common Market's Treaty of Rome; and unilateral nuclear disarmament.

The National Union of Mineworkers delegation remitted a motion criticising the current investigation of left groups within the Labour Party.

The motion had condemned 'witch-hunts' as a 'recipe for disaster' and pledged support for progressive policies.

Withdrawing such a resolution on the spurious grounds of avoiding a split in the STUC is to fall into the trap set by the Bishop Stortford agreement — freedom to the right wing while gagging the left.

Duffy had no such qualms at the engineering union's national committee last week (reported elsewhere in this issue).

Against the background of the naval fleet steaming south to the Malvinas, conference adopted policy calling for the withdrawal of Argentine troops, the recall of the task force and for the administration on the islands to be undertaken by the United Nations until the issue of sovereignty was resolved.

Reflecting the mass pressure building up behind the anti-nuclear movement conference was pressed to pledge itself to a tremendous turnout by unionists — with banners — for the CND march on 6 June. At Easter over 20,000 had marched behind the SCAT banner — the Scottish campaign against Trident.

A six-point plan was approved, seeking cancellation of Cruise and Trident, removal of all nuclear bases from Britain, a nuclear-free zone in

Europe, affiliation to the World Disarmament Campaign and backing for Scottish local authorities declaring nuclear-free zones.

It will oppose with 'utmost vigour' a NATO base at Stornoway, Isle of Lewis.

The fight for women's rights was a key issue at the STUC, with an excellent policy statement on positive action proposed by NALGO being adopted.

Railworkers: prepare for battle

AS RAILWORKERS await the publication of the MacCarthy report on flexible rostering for drivers, British Rail continues its attacks on the industry, writes BRIAN GROGAN.

British Rail has threatened the axing of 6,000 jobs over the next two years in the railway engineering workshops. Engineers who have immediately responded with calls for determined action think that this is the first step to BR moving out of railway engineering entirely.

BR's plans will include the total shutdown of workshops at Shildon in County Durham and at Horwich in Lancashire.

Given the militancy of the response, it is clear that the engineers can give BR a bloody nose in the same way as the train drivers. But this will need unity. Whatever, MacCarthy reports this week, BR has made it clear that it will carry through its attacks on drivers. It is already pushing through flexible rostering on the guards and other staff.

Dennis Green, works committee assistant secretary at Horwich spelled out the conclusions: 'We want a national rail strike and the invoking of the triple alliance. This is

not just Horwich we are fighting for. We are facing the slow strangulation of the nationalised industry by the Thatcher government.'

They did a deal which resulted in at least one woman being elected who has no record whatsoever on women's rights.

Not elected was Mary Harrison, former

chairperson of the Scottish Womens TUC, one of the most prominent and consistent fighters for women's rights in Scotland.

All in all, the 1982 STUC reflected most of the key issues affecting the

British labour movement: international questions of working class solidarity; the Tory offensive on union rights; the need for positive steps to promote women's rights; and the need for an answer to nuclear madness.

Labour movement conference against racism
organised by Coventry Trades Council
Saturday 8 May
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For further information please contact:
The Secretary, Coventry Trades Council,
c/o The Tom Mann Club, 34 Stoke Green, Coventry

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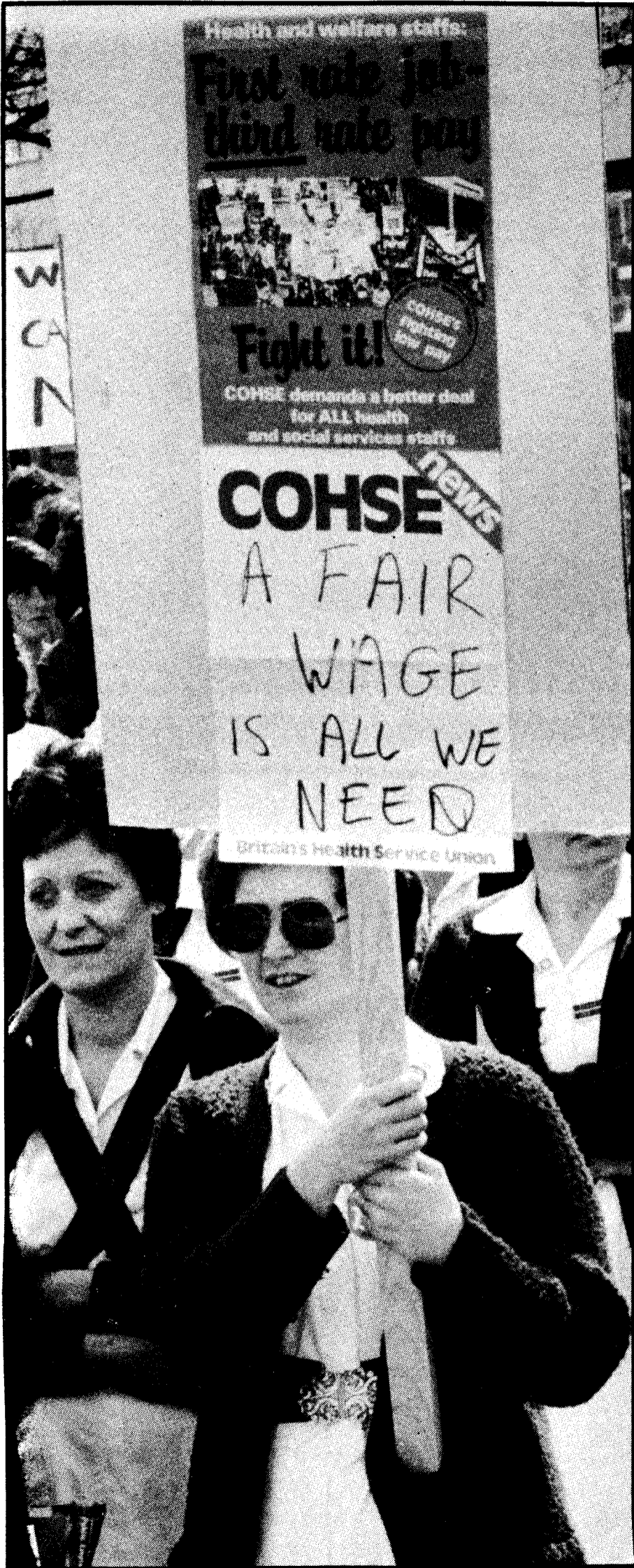
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Pay the health workers



By Tessa van Gelderen

TORY BRITAIN showed its true, blue colours this week. The task force has been sent to the South Atlantic with 'no estimation of cost' although it's rumoured to be at around £1bn. Thatcher's concern is the 'success of the operation' which, she claims, can't be measured in cash terms.

Yet when it comes to saving lives, putting much needed money into a rundown and decrepit health service, the Tories claim there is no money. Hospital workers are being offered from between 6.4 to under 4 per cent — the lowest paid to receive less in an effort to split NHS workers.

Their present levels of pay is appalling. A state enrolled nurse receives £337 a month before deductions. A catering assistant takes home £59 for a 40-hour week.

But all is not gloomy on the wages front. Last week, while hospital workers were taking industrial action in support of their 12

per cent claim, a Mr Edwardes received a small pay rise of 46 per cent to a mere £95,500. And he didn't even have to go on strike to get it.

All he had to do was sack 80,000 car workers in British Leyland. Of course, it must be remembered that poor Edwardes will be leaving BL before the end of the year. The massive wage increase will enable him to receive a massive golden handshake, estimated to be in excess of a quarter of a million pounds. Nice going for some.

In the meantime, hospital workers are left to struggle alone. Action taken this week was a good response given the lack of a real lead from the union leaders. Hospitals were disrupted as members of the Confederation of Health Service Employees took part in two-hour strikes. Mass meetings were held in many hospitals and COHSE members are now refusing to look after private patients.

Public sympathy is with

them, until they take industrial action. But the labour movement has to make it clear: the people responsible for the loss of lives are the Tories. They have allowed the health service to be cut to the bone.

As they spend millions of pounds on armaments, and now the task force, people are literally dying because there aren't enough kidney machines, because there are long waiting lists for beds as hospitals are closed down and so on. And 4 million unemployed doesn't improve the nation's health.

Yes, this week exactly where Thatcher's priority lies. As her popularity appears to be increasing, so it will be the nurses and hospital porters who will be the losers.

The labour movement has to demand that the government pay the 12 per cent, without cuts in services. And if other trade unionists have to defy Tebbit in support of that demand, so be it.

TUC calls 'union day' against Tebbit

by Pat Hickey

THE TUC has declared 10 June as 'union day'. It is urging trade union activists up and down the country to distribute leaflets explaining the meaning of the Tebbit anti-union laws.

But the character of this day of 'explanation' can be gauged from the booklet which they are making available entitled: 'Put your employer on the spot'. The TUC approach is to try to win the support of the bosses rather than mobilising the membership for determined action.

Yet, as the Bill approached its third reading, Tebbit has announced a significant tightening in its provisions under pressure from the employers organisations.

New clauses have been introduced which will make it even easier to sack strikers. Previously the Bill demanded that notice be given to allow strikers to return to work before they could be sacked. Tebbit has now changed this section to allow strikers to be sacked without notice.

In addition, where the Bill had demanded that all strikers be treated equally, the employers can now discriminate as they choose. This will be a blow to the unity which is essential to an effective action

strike, such as overtime bans.

The determination of the Tories to get the Bill on the statute books is in

procedures and probably be on the statute books by June.

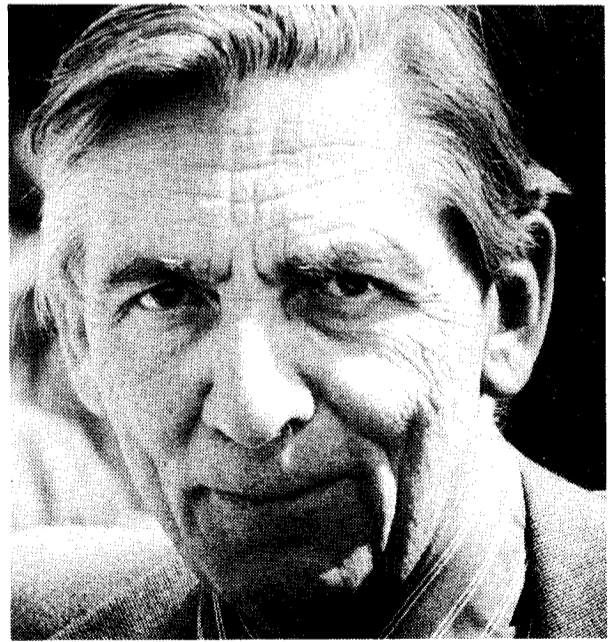
The TUC are waiting to see what develops, intending to use the courts to fight the law and relying on appeals to employers. There is no prospect of defeating the Bill this way.

If the employers are somewhat nervous about the Bill this is solely as a result of the possible reaction of the unions to any attempt to implement its provisions.

But the more the TUC push down the use of industrial muscle, the more likely it is that the bosses will be strengthened in their endeavour.

And Tebbit is by no means finished. The government is already preparing further legislation which will make secret ballots compulsory and will attack the political levy to the Labour Party — introducing contracting-in payments rather than the present contracting-out system.

Militants should be campaigning to turn the 10 June 'union day' into a day of strike action — making it the first 'unlawful' action under the Bill's provisions.



by intimidating some sections into returning to work without their colleagues.

The threat of sackings will now also extend to workers taking solidarity action which falls short of

sharp contrast to the wait-and-see line of the TUC. They will be imposing a guillotine in parliament to ensure that the Bill becomes law as soon as possible. Then it will be rushed through the final

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